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CONTENTS

Mihaela GLIGOR,
Editorial 7

STUDIES

R.K.K. RAJARAJAN,
Woven Threads of the *Rāmāyaṇa*
The Early Āḻvārs on Brahmā and Rāvaṇa 9

Ionuț MOISE,
The 'Static' and the 'Dynamic'
in Vaiśeṣika's Eschatology.. 46

Rohit UKEY,
Discourse on So-called Śiva Vāman Image:
A Comprehensive study of the Mansar's Brick structure
(Hidimba Hill/MNS 3) and Images 96

Mihaela GLIGOR,
Maitreyi. The Bengali Connection 134

REVIEWS

Radu SAVA,
Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds.),
Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India,
Springer, Cham, 2017, 270 pp.,
ISBN: 978-3-319-44035-4 156

Hilda-Hedvig VARGA,
Devdutt Pattanaik, *Culture. 50 Insights from Mythology*,
HarperCollins Publishers, 2017, 240 pp.,
ISBN: 978-93-52644988 164

Cătălina-Ioana PAVEL,
Binoo K. John, *The Curry Coast. Travels in Malabar 500 years after Vasco da Gama*,
Speaking Tiger, India, 2016, 251 pp.,
ISBN: 978-93-86050-68-7 169

Romanian Journal of Indian Studies

EDITORIAL

Mihaela GLIGOR
Cluj Center for Indian Studies
Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

> India is seen as a country of immense diversity, of distinct hopes, of vast and disparate beliefs, of extraordinary customs and a genuine feast of opinions.
> The cultural heritage of contemporary India combines the Islamic influences with the Hindu ones, as well as those pertaining to other traditions, and the outcome of the interaction among different religious communities can be fully seen in literature, music, painting, architecture and many other fields.
> (Amartya Sen, Nobel prize laureate).

India is a mixture of emotions, colours, feelings, music, happiness, sorrow, life and death, gods and people. India is an endless puzzle which each soul that meets its mystery tries to solve. India is infinite, just as untrammelled as the fascination that it produces in the others

India is an incredible rich culture, with a history of thousands of years. It saw the rise of various civilizations, religions, dynasties, human groups, cultures and arts. India has been presented and represented in many forms in literary discourses, arts and heritage

symbols. But the country is so vast that there always remains an area to be explored. Moreover, there are many new things to be interpreted and established. Any discussion on anything belonging to India and its culture is incomplete without interdisciplinary dialogue between various cultural aspects and elements.

Through its stories, India has always attracted people of distant places from archeologists, travelers, merchants, artists to scientists and academic researchers. Its rich diversity and its myths, legends, arts or music fascinated and allured many minds. The languages of India, from Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Tamil, the regional languages from the ancient times, to Persian and Urdu from the medieval times and English from the modern period, were and still are fascinating for linguists and researchers.

The *Romanian Journal of Indian Studies* encourages interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics, literature and literary studies, Indian philosophy, history of religions, political philosophy, history of ideas, science, anthropology, sociology, education, communications theory and performing arts. One of its primary aims is the integration of the results of the several disciplines of the humanities so that its articles will have a synthetic character in order to acquaint the reader with the progress being made in the general area of Indian Studies.

The *Romanian Journal of Indian Studies* is affiliated to *Cluj Center for Indian Studies* from Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca. The Journal appears once per year and it is dedicated to all those with interests in Indian culture.

Woven Threads of the *Rāmāyaṇa*
The Early Āl̲vārs on Brahmā and Rāvaṇa

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Abstract: The Tamil Vaiṣṇava mystics, the Āl̲vārs offer clues to new mythologies, the source of which could not be traced with reference to the Sanskritic originals such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. One such mythology pertains to the boon obtained by Rāvaṇa from Brahmā. The Tamil mystics do reveal Viṣṇu appeared as a baby on the lap of Brahmā to warn him not to sanction the boon, which may be catastrophic for cosmic peace. Viṣṇu appearing as a baby is not a new theme. The Little Master lying on the lap of Brahmā (considered the son of Viṣṇu, originating in the lotus emanating from the umbilicus of Śeṣaśāyī) as a baby is novel. Later medieval commentators, the Ācāryas, e.g. Nam Piḷḷai and Periyavāccān̲ Piḷḷai in their commentaries add the source of this myth could not be traced in the *itihāsa-purāṇa*s. It might suggest the early medieval Āl̲vārs had consulted a version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* that was not accessible to the Ācāryas. Alternatively, it may be added such enigmatic versions were based on folk or oral traditions.

Keywords: Āl̲vārs; *Nālāyirativviyappirapantam*, Brahmā, Rāvaṇa; *Rāmāyaṇa*; Ācāryas; folk tradition; oral history.

The Tamil mystics, the Āḻvārs, have notified new myths that do not find parallels in the original Sanskritic sources; e.g. the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki, *Harivaṃśa* in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. For example, Iḷaṅkō in the 'Aycciyarkuravai' of the *Cilappatikāram* (17, *Uḷvarivāḻttu* 1) says Kṛṣṇa rooted out the *kurutam* (Atlantia racemosa, wild lime; Sanskrit 'arjuna' *Terminalia Arjuna* Monier-Williams 2005: 99; 'arjunasādaḍā' Apte 2012: 52) trees, Yamalājunabhaṅga at Dvārakā. This feat was performed in the Gokula by the baby-Kṛṣṇa in Sanskritic sources. Scholars may consider this poetic exaggeration[1] on part of the Tamil mystics in an effort to unravel the mysteries. Similarly, the 'Vēṭṭuvavari' of the *Cilappatikāram* (12, *Vēṟu* 10) says Durgā as a spinster, Kumārī, presents a dance decorated with the garlands of *koṉṟai* (Cassia fistula, sacred to Śiva) and *tuḷavam/tuḷaci* (Ocimum sanctum, sacred to Viṣṇu)[2]. This idiom may be new to the *Devīmāhātmyam*. These new idioms may have inventive ideas to convey if deeply probed; maybe based on oral or folk traditions.

[1] The *Tiruvāymoḻi* (3.1.2) says silly poets' talk of exaggerated accounts of realities; cf. a twentieth century (1960s) movie song: *poyyilē piṟantu poyyilē vaḷarnta pulavar perumāṉē* "the dignified poet is born in sophism and talks falsehood" (cited from memory). Truly, "All that glitters is not gold".

[2] The Āḻvārs say *kalpaka* flowers are floating on the sacred water of Mother Gaṅgā (Periyāḻvār *Tirumoḻi* 4.7.7). The Gaṅgā gently flows with the flowers of *tuḻāy* (Ocimum sanctum) and *koṉṟai* (Cassia fistula) drifting on the flooding water (*ibidem* 4.7.2). See Rajarajan 2017.

In retelling the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the regional mythologies considerably differ from the original version of *ādikavi*-Vālmīki. Scholars are able to detect some interpolations in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki, and suggest the *Daśaratha*-*Jātaka*[3] was the model for Vālmīki. Some interpolated passages are spotted in the *Cilappatikāram* also, particularly in the 'Aḻarpaṭukātai' (Rajarajan 2016: 350-54), a literature much later (nearly a millennium) than Vālmīki. In such a case, interpolations in Vālmīki's annals may have to be viewed from different angles. Therefore, the entire epic need not be dated in the early centuries of the Christian era. Another factor in remoulding the epic was the shifting cultural idioms to suit the changing time; e.g. Sītā physically lifted by Rāvaṇa in Vālmīki and Rāvaṇa lifting the cottage that accommodated Sītā in Kampaṉ (Rajarajan 2001: 783-97). The present article reports another rare thematic idiom told in the hymns of the early Āḻvārs that fails to appear in Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa*. Later medieval commentators, e.g. Nam Piḷḷai (1147-1252 CE) and Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai (1167-1262 CE), including Aṇṇaṅgarācārya could not trace the roots of these idioms. The question is open to discussion in frantic search to trace the roots.

The problem for examination is very simple. Its root is difficult to trace as the parable is *nadimūlaṃ* (where a river originates, e.g. the Gaṅgā [cf. Rajarajan 2017] and Kāviri) and

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[3] Were the *Jātaka*s (cf. the Vikramāditya tales) composed in the 6^{th} century BCE, contemporaneous with the Buddha? (MacDonell 1971: 313).

ṛṣimūlaṃ (where the *ṛṣi* is born[4]) that are beyond discovery. It could even be speculated whether the early Āḻvārs[5] had at their disposal a version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* that included the enigma ("zetetic" Nigam 2000) under discussion[6], the original verses of which were lost in course of time. This is to suggest that the authentic Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa* that scholars profess to follow today was not exactly the same that the Āḻvārs had at their disposal; cf. the Beṅgāli and Southeast Asian redactions, including the *Daśaratha-Jātaka* and the *Rāmopākhyāṇa* ('Vana Parvan' of the *Mahābhārata*). What I want to assert is the so-called "interpolated passages" (the *Bāla*- and *Ayodhyā -kāṇḍa*s) in the Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa* could have been added at a time of which the Āḻvārs had no idea. Certain problems centering round the *Rāmāyaṇa* myths continue to be enigmatic.

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[4] For example, the *ṛṣi*-Vyāsa, popularly known as *veda*-Vyāsa is supposed to be the son of *ṛṣi*-Parāśara and the boat-rowing woman Satyavatī. He was called Kānīna due to illegal birth and 'Kṛṣṇa'-[Dvaipāyana] because he was black (Dowson 1998: 370). The birth status of several Āḻvārs is not known (cf. the *Guruparampara* mythologies, e.g. *Āṟāyirappaṭi*), e.g. Poykai, Pūtam, Pēy, Tirumaḻicai, Tiruppāṇ and Āṇṭāḷ.

[5] Vaiṣṇava hagiographies (e.g. *Āṟāyirappaṭi-Guruparamparaprabhāvam*) call them *mutal*- Āḻvār under whom Poykai, Pēy and Pūtam are considered. Tirumaḻicai Āḻvār could also be listed because the four are traditionally dated in *Dvāpara-yuga* (4202 BCE); historically c. sixth-seventh century CE. They belong to the Toṇṭaināṭu (northern Tamilnāṭu), which means though linked with Kōvalūr in Nāṭunāṭu the saga of Vaiṣṇava hymnal composition began in the Pallava region (Kalidos 2016).

[6] Rajarajan, Parthiban and Kalidos (2017a) are puzzled to notice several citations of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in Nam Piḷḷai and Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai could not be traced in the Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa*, published by the Gītā Press.

Statement of the Problem

Rāvaṇa was the son of Viśravas and Kaikasī born in the lineage of Pulastya. The genealogy is given as follows: (descended from Brahmā, son of Viṣṇu) Pulastya > Viśravas > Rāvaṇa (Fig. 1 and 1a). Kubera was the half-brother of Rāvaṇa[7]. He was deprived of his regal status and driven away from Laṅkā. Kuṃbhakarṇa and Vibhīṣaṇa were the uterine brothers of Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa was *daśagrīva*. The three brothers conducted penance for 10,000 years and acquired incredible boons[8] from Brahmā. Rāvaṇa stood in the midst of *pañcāgni*s,

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[7] Kubera (Kuvera in early authorities, Dowson 1998: 174) was the son of Prajāpati Pulastya; Vaisravas was another son created from half of the Prajāpati, mind-born son of Brahmā.

[8] Tamil *varam* "boon, gift, blessing by a deity or great person", grace, favour, *anugraha*, blessing, supplication and so on (*Tamil Lexicon* VI, 3500-501). Cf. the *varadahasta* (or *varadamudrā* "gesture of granting wishes") of Viṣṇu; the Lord called Varadarāja (Attiyūr in Kāñcīpuram). The *Tiruvāymoḻi* (3.9.7) considers the 'varadahasta' *māri aṇaiyakai* "hand meant for giving as the rain pours. "Boon" in English dictionaries (Webster's and Oxford) gives the meaning "favour", thing asked for (*bon* in old Norse "petition"; cf. bon voyage and French *bon-homie*), a very helpful thing; something that is very helpful and makes life easier for you; Deutsch *Wohltat*, *Segen*. For *varam* see Rajarajan, Parthiban and Kalidos (2017a: 1562-62): *Tiruvantāti* II 84, 89-90; *Nāṉmukaṉ Tiruvantāti* 5, 19; *Tiruccantaviruttam* 25, 58, 69, 96; *Tirumoḻi* of Periyāḻvār 3.10.3.
a. "Boon" Brahmā (e.g. Hiraṇya and Rāvaṇa) and Śiva (e.g. Bhasmāsura) offer boons to demons and suffer later, Viṣṇu is the redeemer; *peru-varam* "great boon", rhyming with *divyadeśa*-Araṅkam, suggesting it is a boon to live in Araṅkam (*Tirumoḻi* of Periyāḻvār 4.8.5), *paru-varam* "weighty boons" (ibidem 4.8.10); *kēṭil-cīr-varam* "harmless benign gift" (*Tiruccantaviruttam* 108).

amputated his own limbs, and when he was about to cut off his tenth head, Brahmā appeared and granted the desired boon. The boon was that he could only be killed by a mortal human being, *nara* and not a divinity, *deva*[9]. An earlier authority says Rāvaṇa was made invulnerable against gods and demons, but he was doomed to die due to his infatuation for women (Dowson 1998: 264, cf. Rajarajan 2016a: 75-76 citing *Periya Tirumoḻi* 10.2.2). Sītā in her previous birth was a virtuous virgin called Vedavatī (*Veda*-incarnate). She was molested, rather raped by Rāvaṇa[10]. Vedavatī committed suicide cursing Rāvaṇa she will be reborn the daughter of Janaka and responsible for his death[11]. Kamil V. Zvelebil considers Rāvaṇa a hero from a study of modern Tamil fiction that must be the impact of the DK (Anitha 2016: 67-77) movements who

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b. Devotion, love (*Tiruccantaviruttam* 78).

[9] Vettam Mani (1996: 645) cites the *Rāmāyaṇa*-s of Vālmīki and Kampaṉ.

[10] Some earlier authorities on Indian art talk of the "Rape of Sītā", which verbally was not the case if it involves sexual intercourse. She was kidnapped by physical contact in Vālmīki and lifting the cottage with no touch (Rajarajan 2001).

[11] See figure of *daśagrīva*-Rāvaṇa in Wilkins (2000: 178-79, fig. p. 185, cf. Kalidos 1989: pl. 36). Wilkins follows the translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by Prof. Griffiths. Rāvaṇa as *daśagrīva* is popular in early medieval art, cf. the famous Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti in Kailāsa, Ellora (plinth of the monolithic temple to its south). See also Śiva granting boons to Rāvaṇa. According to the Śaivite lore Rāvaṇa was granted a mighty sword and the Ātma-Liṅga by Śiva, which he could not carry to Laṅkā (Kalidos 1991: 214-20, pls. I-IV), cf. Vibhīṣaṇa and the *raṅga-vimāna* of Śrīraṅgam. In these figures Rāvaṇa is *daśagrīva*.

considered Rāvaṇa a Drāviḍian hero opposed to the Āryan Rāma (Zvelebil 1988: 126-34)[12]. Modern fictions and film songs may serve cross-cultural studies but could not be taken into serious account when we consider the primeval mythologies and proto-histories or archaeological evidences dated three to five millennia ago. Three channels of ideas regarding the doom of Rāvaṇa are traceable from the above myths that is specified as follows.

1) Immunity from death that may be caused by a god or a demon;

2) Boon to die at the hand of a human being because Rāvaṇa thought no mortal could kill him;

3) Rāvaṇa's infatuation/libido for women (see Annexes); curse of a woman, Vedavatī; woman as the root-cause Rāvaṇa's death (Rajarajan 2016a: 76).

What is important from the point of the present study is the "Early [Mutal] Āḻvārs" have a new myth to tell regarding the

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[12] Scholars from Kāmarūpa (Assam) consider Narakāsura, a non-Āryan hero who ruled the land anterior to the advent of Āryans. Kampaṉ (c. twelfth century CE) in the *Irāmāvatāram* (6.37.238) says Rāma was Ārya from the north; *Ayyaṉ vantāṉ Āriyaṉ vantāṉ* "the Lord (Rāma) came and the Ārya came", a clear pointer of the Āryanization/Saskritization of South India. Kampaṉ is cited in Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai (Zvelebil 1974: 147). It is reasonable to suggest Kampaṉ and Nam Piḷḷai and his disciple, Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai followed a version of the Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa* that was different from what the early Āḻvārs consulted. It is a universally accepted fact whether Tiruppāṇ (untouchable *pāṇaṉ*) or Nammāḻvār (*veḷḷāḷaṉ*, serf or landlord) or Tirumaṅkai (*kaḷḷaṉ*) all the twelve Āḻvārs were experts in Vedic, itihāsic and purāṇic lore (Rajarajan 2016c: 50-52).

boon granted to Rāvaṇa by Brahmā. By the way, I would like to say Poykai, Pūtam, Pēy and Tirumaḻicai are considered "Early Āḻvārs". The simple logic is that they are dated in *Dvāparayuga* 4202 BCE (see Rajarajan et al. 2017: I, 27). Traditional scholars consider the first three as Mutal (Early) Āḻvārs. We consider Tirumaḻicai under the same category because they are supposed to have born on the same date according to the *Guruparampara* hagiographies. The hymnal compositions of the four Āḻvārs are the following: *Tiruvantāti* I (Poykai), *Tiruvantāti* II (Pūtam, *bhūta* denotes the Bhāgavata) and Tiruvantāti III (Pēy denotes a "fanatical slave", cf. Kāraikkālammaiyār in Śaiva lore), and *Tiruccantaviruttam* and *Nāṉmukaṉ Tiruvantāti* (Maḻicai). They are considered super-human, not born in human-*yoni* but *devayoni* such as a flower or pond, e.g. *poykai* literally means a "grove".

The hymns of Āḻvārs Poyaki, Pūtam and Malicai do reveal Rāvaṇa undertook a strenuous penance seeking immortality from the God of *sṛṣṭi*-Brahmā. Pleased with the penance of Rāvaṇa, Brahmā was about to sanction the boon. Brahmā did not know he was the evil-genius Rāvaṇa in disguise that was undertaking strenuous *tapas*. Perhaps, Rāvaṇa was in the guise of a sage; cf. how he deceived Sītā in the Pañcavaṭi as a *ṛṣi* (Kalidos 1989: pl. 44). When the boon was about to be granted, Viṣṇu appeared a baby (Little Master, cf. *ciṟukaṇ* in *Tirumoḻi* of Periyāḻvār 1.5.7) on the lap of Brahmā to point out the pretender seeking the boon was a demon. Thereby,

Brahmā was subtly pointed out the real nature and motive of the demon of Laṅkā and advised not to grant the boon; cf. the Bhasmāsura episode (Mani 1996: 127). The ten-heads of Rāvaṇa were exposed to Brahmā. Three hymns of the early Āl̲vārs deal with the mysterious myth that may be epitomized[13].

I am presenting the Roman transcription of the hymns, *patavurai* (word to word or phrase to phrase English rendering) and summary in English see Rajarajan et al. 2017: I, 63, 168, 262-63).

> *Tiruvantāti* I 45
> āmē yamarark kar̲iya atunir̲ka
> nāmē yar̲ikir̲pōm nan̲n̲eñcē - pūmēya
> mātavattōn̲ tāḷpaṇinta vāḷarakkan̲ nīṇmuṭiyai
> pātamattāl eṇṇin̲ān̲ paṇpu
>
> *Even the gods could not measure the depth of Viṣṇu-Māya's illusions. Good mind! It is a pleasure to find out why the God on flower,* padmajā-*Brahmā granted boons to the sword-demon,* khaḍga-*Rāvaṇa when he consummated a strenuous penance. The ten-heads of the demon were rationally counted by the Lord's sacred foot.*

Cf. Śiva pressed his thumb when Rāvaṇa dare lift the Kailāsa. (Dhar 2015: figs. 13.1 and 13.2)

[13] For Roman transcription of the hymns and *patavurai* (meaning of words and phrases) see Rajarajan, Parthiban and Kalidos (2017:I).

Tiruvantāti III 77
āynta varumaṟaiyōṉ nāṉmukattōṉ naṉkuṟaṅkil
vāynta kuḻaviyāy vāḷarakkaṉ - ēynta
muṭippōtu mūṉṟēḻeṉ ṟeṇṇiṉāṉ ārtta
aṭippōtu naṅkaṭ karaṉ

The Lord Viṣṇu appeared as a child on the lap of the master of chosen scriptures and the four-faced, [caurmukha]-*Brahmā. He counted the three plus seven (ten) heads of the sword wielding*[14] *demon,* daśagrīva-*Rāvaṇa*[15]*. The Lord Viṣṇu's flowery feet are our asylum.*

Nānmukan Tiruvantāti 44
koṇṭu kuṭaṅkāl mēl vaitta kuḻaviyāy
taṇṭavarakkaṉ[*] talai tāḷāl - paṇṭeṇṇi
poṅkumaraṉ niṟkum poḻil Vēṅkaṭamalaikkē
pōṅkumararuḷḷīr purintu

---

[14] *Vāḷarakkaṉ* "sword-demon" was Rāvaṇa (*Tiruvantāti* I 45, *Tiruvantāti* III 77, Periyāḻvār *Tirumoḻi* 4.2.2, *Tiruccantaviruttam* 116, *Periya Tirumoḻi* 2.2.2, 5.4.4); the sword was gifted by Śiva (Periyavāccān Piḷḷai on Periyāḻvār *Tirumoḻi* 4.2.2), known as Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti (see note 10).

[15] Experts (e.g. His Holiness Aṇṇaṅgarācārya) have commented on the new mythology: Rāvaṇa hiding his ten-heads sought a boon from Brahmā. Viṣṇu appeared a baby on Brahmā's lap, counted the ten-heads of Rāvaṇa and warned Brahmā not to grant the boon. The commentators add this mythology is not traceable in the *itihāsa-purāṇa*s.

[*] *Daṇḍāsura* means "punishing demon"; Dantavaktra was a demon, an enemy of Kṛṣṇa (Dowson 1998: 80).

> *Once upon a time the Lord appeared a baby on the lap of Brahmā and pointed out the hidden ten-heads of Rāvaṇa by the little foot to declare his identity. The Sarveśvara-Viṣṇu is present on the Vēṅkaṭam hills full of water reservoirs. The good-natured juvenile* bhāgavatas *go in search of the Master.*

That is to say Viṣṇu appeared as a baby on Brahmā's lap and pointed out the ten-heads of Rāvaṇa counted by the little fingers of his leg (cf. *ciṟukaiviral* little fingers of hands *Perumāḷ Tirumoḻi* 7.6). Brahmā was warned not to sanction the boon that may be dangerous for cosmic harmony. Brahmā could not cognize the signal, which ultimately led to the Rāmāvatāra; birth of Rāma in the Solar Race, birth Sītā (Vedavatī) in Mithilā, their marriage, excommunication of Rāma, Sītāpaharaṇa, war with Laṅkā, and annihilation of the demonic race, including Rāvaṇa. Otherwise, Brahmā's will was the incorrigible demon should be admonished for violating human rights. If the note is sporadic, it could be brushed aside; when repeatedly affirmed by three mystics, it will have to be considered with rapt attention.

Rationale

The new mythology pertaining to Rāvaṇa's penance and Brahmā's boon leads to two possible generalizations.

1) The early Āḻvārs (sixth-seventh centuries) must have consulted a southern version of Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa* (cf.

Krishnacharya 1905) that could have been lost by about the time of commentators, Nam Piḷḷai and Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai (twelfth-thirteenth centuries).

That means the problems centering on *Rāmāyaṇa* studies could not be solved with reference to the standard editions that scholars follow today in the east or the west[16]. Some original versions of the epic must have been lost by about the fifth-sixth century CE leading to interpolations that were found missing in the then available manuscripts of the epic. The interpolations must be editorial work on part of the literatures just as fill-in-gaps. These reconstructions could have been made possible by consulting the orally transmitted epic by experts (e.g. *sūta*s), and need not be imaginary patch-up work. Therefore, the so-called interpolations in the *Bāla*- and *Ayodhyā*- *kāṇḍa*s are possibly based on oral traditions. They are not fictitious. They need not have been willful alterations telling the mythologies deviating from Vālmīki. This is not possible in a tradition-bound country as India. Scholarly academies (e.g. the Tamil Caṅkam) would not have permitted any major deviation leading to problems such as Ayodhyā and Sāketa (e.g. the debate between Śiva and Nakkīrar, see Rajarajan & Jeyapriya 2013: 38). Language style and prosody are immaterial for scholars interested in mythologies.

[16] See bibliography in Brockington (1998: 548). I have cited two references from this work that gives a list of the *Rāmāyaṇa*s published during the past 200 years ago.

Mythologies were originally folk or oral transmissions, later codified in literary form, e.g. the *Tiruviḷaiyāṭaṟ Purāṇam* (ibidem, chap. I). This yardstick applies to the *Rāmāyaṇa* if the *suta*s and Vālmīki are considered. Tamilologists say Kampaṉ (twelfth century) composed his *Irāmāvatāram* ('Avatāra of Rāma') by listening to the story narrated by an informant, Tamil *pāṇar*.

In any case all that we find in any so-called standard edition today need not be the handwork of Vālmīki or the reworked epic; and on that ground the *ādikavi* need not be dragged to the fourth-fifth centuries CE by waves of scholarship (professors Jacobi to Brockington) proficient in grammar and comparative literary criticism.

2) Another possibility is that the Āḻvārs must have depended on oral or folk[17] traditions; e.g. Rāma acting as Kṛṣṇa (on the model of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā*s[18], especially *rāsakrīḍa*).

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[17] See how Brahmā is transformed Viruman or Virumāṇṭi in the folk cult tradition and oral myths of the Piṟamalai-*kaḷḷaṉ* community temples in the western Maturai region (Dumont 1986, Loshita, 2014: 62-72). Brahmā, Śiva, Mohinī and Hariharaputra are linked in the local mythologies.

[18] Dāśarathi-Rāma was responsible for the "love-fever" of maidens suffering from *kātal-nōy* (cf. *Tiruvāymoḻi* 2.1.9, 5.4.6). Twenty hymns in the *Periya Tirumoḻi* (9.3.1-10, 9.4.1-10) on *divyadeśa*-Pullāṇi are on this subject. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are the two alternative heroes that figure in the Āḻvārs' hymns (nearly ninety hymns of the *Periya Tirumoḻi* listed in Rajarajan 2016a: 70-71, e.g. *Tiruvāymoḻi* 2.6.9) commented by the Ācāryas with reference to the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. Therefore, the subject-matter in the hymns is on the twain Kṛṣṇaism (cf. Hardy 2014: 1-48) and Rāmaism.

Viṣṇu as a baby on the lap of Brahmā is an important idea because by mythical tradition Brahmā is the son of Viṣṇu (Padmanābha in *Tiruvāymoḻi* 2.7.10, Jeyapriya 2015: 109). He in turn was the father of Śaṅkara-Śiva. The *Nāṉmukaṉ Tiruvantāti* (v. 1) is relevant in this context:

> nāṉmukanai[19] nārāyaṇaṉ paṭaittāṉ nānmukaṉum
> tānmukamāyc caṅkaraṉaittāṉ paṭaittāṉ - yāṉmukamāy
> antātimēliṭṭu arivittēnāḻporuḷaic
> cintāmaṟ koḷminīr tērntu
>
> *Nārāyaṇa was creator of the four-faced Brahmā. The four-faced was the creator of Śiva-Śaṅkara in his own image. I have declared this* antāti *(100 hymns) in my own way that is full of deep-rooted implications. Do not miss any, search for the ideal meaning and follow it.*

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[19] Nāṉmukaṉ[*], the "four-faced" Brahmā; four-faces to utter the four-*Veda*s simultaneously (Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai on *Tiruccantaviruttam* 51); Nāṉmukak-*kaṭavuḷ* (*Tiruvāciriyam* 7, *Tiruvāymoḻi* 3.4.8, 7.2.10) the four-faced God; *niṟai*-Nāṉmukaṉ "Absolute Brahmā" (*Tiruvāymoḻi* 6.10.8); *nāmakaḷai akampāṟ koṇṭa nāṉmukaṉ* "Brahmā keeps Vacdevī in his person", Vācdevī would suggest she occupies the tongue of Brahmā (*vāc* "word", "speech" Apte 2012: 499).

[*] For concordance see Rajarajan, Parthiban & Kalidos (2017a: 922): *Tiruvantāti* I 33; *Tiruvantāti* II 78; *Tiruccantaviruttam* 5, 72; *Nanmukan Tiruvantāti* 1, 9, 19, 31, 82, 87, 96; *Tiruvāciriyam* 4-5; Periyāḻvār *Tirumoḻi* 1.6.3, 4.1.5, 4.9.5, 4.10.5; *Tiruvāymoḻi* 1.3.7, 1.5.3, 1.9.10, 2.2.10, 3.1.7, 3.6.4, 4.10.1, 6.6.4, 7.5.4, 7.6.2-3, 7.6.7, 8.3.9, 8.4.10, 10.1.3, 10.10.1; *Periya Tirumoḻi* 1.7.8, 2.9.1, 3.4.2, 4.2.9, 5.4.1, 9.10.9, 11.5.2, 11.6.3.

We have to search for the idiom that considers Viṣṇu a baby on the lap of Brahmā. Viewing Kṛṣṇa (Fig. 2) or Rāma as a baby or lad is a familiar theme in literature and art; cf. the *Bāla-Rāmāyaṇa* modern paintings in the *Rāmacaritamanas* temple in Kāśī (Rajarajan 2010: 9-12, fig. B.W. 31). Viewing Śiva as a baby is popularized in calendar art (Pattanaik 1997: fig. p. 65, cf. fig. p. 32). Viṣṇu as the Cosmic Child is Vaṭapatraśāyi (Fig. 2b) reposing on the *vaṭapatra/ālilai*[20]. Santāna-Gopāla (Fig. 2a) is the baby-Kṛṣṇa fed by his foster-mother Yaśodā, and the same little-Master sucked forth the soul of Pūtanā (Fig. 3a & 3b). Skanda as a baby may appear on the lap of Śiva or Devī in Somāskanda (Fig. 4) stone sculptures of the Pallavas (Srinivasan 1964: pl. XLVI, Kalidos 2006: II, pl. LXXVII.1; Fig. 4a) and Cōḻa bronzes (Sivaramamurti 1981: pl. 36a; Fig. 4b).

Brahmā had several *mānasaputra*s[21]. He is not associated with children in the visual arts whereas Śiva is[22]. It has to be explored whether any visual evidence for the baby-Viṣṇu lying on the lap of Brahmā exists. This is a relevant question if

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[20] Ālilaimēvumāyaṉ is a familiar theme in the hymns of the Āḻvārs (Kalidos 1989: pl. 34; Kalidos 2006: I, 15).

[21] They are Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra (Dowson 1998: 277).

[22] See the Pahari miniature in Pattanaik (1997: figs. pp. 43, 77). An enchanting painting, it shows Ganapati and Kumāra on the lap of Śiva and Pārvatī wrapped within a blanket (*gajaśarman* showing the elephant-head at one corner) on top of the Himālayas. The bull, lion or tiger, mouse and peacock are lying down. A skull is found near a hearth.

viewed in the context of the Mātṛkas fondling babies (cf. Cave XIV, Ellora)[23]. Shivaji Panikkar (1997: l. 62) brings to attention an image of single-faced Brāhmī along with Śiva carrying a baby (Fig. 5). The baby could be Viṣṇu if the other two represent Śiva and Brahmā; cf. Anasūyā converting the Trimūrtis into babies (Fig. 6)[24]. Few other images from the north show Brāhmī carrying babies (Panikkar 1997: pls. 106, 139, 168). Brahmā and Brahmī are the same if Godhood is viewed under the no-gender category, Brahman "the Absolute". Viṣṇu is man, woman and neither of these two (Rajarajan 2005: fig. 4, 2012: fig. 10; Fig. 7)[25].

Viṣṇu-baby linked with Brahmā is hidden mythos that has evaded the attention of scholars working on Indian literature and art. The early Āḻvārs had transmitted the idea based on antique versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* or folk-lore further commented by the Ācāryas. It is a vibrant theme for further

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[23] For illustrations see Soundarararjan (1981: pls. XXVII, L.B, LXXVII), Panikkar (1997: pl. 62) and Kalidos (2006: III, pl. XXV.1-2).

[24] The story of Anasūyā is popular in Tamil and Telugu oral myths and also in the South Indian movies. There are two Telugu movies on the Anasūyā myth, *Sati Anasūyā* (1957) and *Sati Anasūyā* (1971). The Tamil movie *Mupperum Tēviyar* (1987) in the conclusive part ends with the music track *Mūṉṟu teyvam* crisply elucidating the myth.

[25] "He is neither a man nor woman and neither of these two" *āṇiṇōṭu peṇṇumāki yallavōṭu nallavāy* (*Tiruccantaviruttam* 26); *āṇallaṉ peṇṇallaṉ allā aliyum allaṉ* (neither a man nor woman and eunuch *Tiruvāymoḻi* 2.5.9-10). Cf. Śiva in *Tiruvācakam* (Pope 2003): *Tiruccatakam* 5.2, *Tiruvaṇṭappakuti l.* 57, *Nīttalviṇṇappam* 22, *Tiruvempāvai* 18, *Tirupponnūcal* 5 (Jeyapriya 2009: 162).

exploration by scholars interested in religious studies, Indian literature, particularly the *Rāmāyaṇa* in thought and art. Women[26] as the root-cause of the rise (e.g. *Rāṇi* Maṅgammāḷ in Tamilnadu) and fall, e.g. Sītā, Cleopatra, and Helen of Troy (Rajarajan 2016b: 229-48) of empires are common in Greek, Egyptian and Indian mythology and history[27]. The Āḻvārs seem to reflect on an archaic motif, viz., the *rākṣasa* vs. the *deva*; the question from the rationalist point of view is: who is *rākṣasa* or *asura* (Hale 1980) and who the *deva* is (cf. Zvelebil 1988)? The Supreme God of Mazdeism, Ahura Mazda ('Ormazd' Winternitz 1977: 32) in Iranian lore may be god and *asura* in Āryan culture.

Eventually, it could only be added research on Indian *itihāsa*s, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* never reach an end-point. It is a continuous dialogue since the time written by Vālmīki going through Kampaṉ and coming down to our experts in the field (e.g. professors Jacobi and Brockington).

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[26] The *Aḍbhuta-Rāmāyaṇa* talks of the annihilation of *sahasramukha*-Rāvaṇa by Kālī, which is a Śākta oriented Tantric theme in literature and art. What Rāma could accomplish by releasing the Rāma-*bāṇa* to kill *daśamukha*-Rāvaṇa was performed by Kālī by a single blow to topple *sahasragrīva*-Rāvaṇa (Kalidos: 1990: 115-43, fig. 25; Rajarajan 2016b: 229-49).

[27] To talk in hidden terms of contemporary history it could only be added the defectors of Tamilnadu-*agrahāra* are in Karnāṭaka-*agrahāra*. I do not want to elaborate this issue as it might lead to controversial character assessment of two women in recent trends (2016-2017) of assassination-politics in Tamilnadu.

Annexes

1.
Rāvaṇa, the Kāmādhiṣṭhata

The Āḻvārs in a number of hymns typify the lascivious ethos of Rāvaṇa whose lust for women was the cause of his fall[28]. A few hymns from the *Periya Tirumoḻi* (10.1-2.1-10) of Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār are cited to show how Rāvaṇa's libido/lust[29] was responsible for his end (Rajarajan 2016a: 75-80). The English summary of the hymns is presented here; for Romanization of the Tamil hymns, *patavurai* and English translation see Rajarajan et al. 2017: IV, 2085-98).

10.2.1. "Our (the *rākṣasa*s of Laṅkā) king had committed abominable blunders devoid of mercy toward Sītā. It had had its repercussion in his life-time itself. What is the use of saying all these events of the *yuddhakāṇḍa* (of the *Rāmāyaṇa*) in detail? … We are aghast; we shall join the chorus to acclaim 'Hail Victory' to Rāma."

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[28] *Kāma* denotes "love" (cf. Kāmadeva and *Kāmasūtra*); when tinged with *loba* (cupidity) and *krodha* (irascible passion) man becomes a beast. The Tamil lexis, *Piṅkalam* (v. 1904) says the following are the symptoms of love-sickness: *viraha* (experiencing the fire of love during separation, cf. Hardy 1983/2014), *madana* (intoxicating love, delighting in the excesses of love) and *kāmaduḥkha* (sorrow of love, mad after a girl).

[29] *The Webster's New Dictionary & Thesaurus* (1995: 602-602) gives a long list of synonyms for "love" (adore, appreciate, cherish, desire, dote on, hold dear and so on), and "lust" (carnality, cupidity, greed, lasciviousness, lechery and so on). The cited dictionary brings *kāma* and Kāmadeva (diacritics mine) under lust; is it so?

10.2.2. "Rāvaṇa's divine properties were ten tall crowned heads, and if ten multiplied by two are twenty mighty arms. He ruined his self due to infatuation for women (*cittam maṅkaiyarpāl vaittuk keṭṭāṉ*[30]… "mind all the time rested on women, he was ruined). We (the *rākṣasa*s) are sorry for the evil path we tread."

10.2.3. "That day Rāvaṇa dare infiltrate into the Daṇḍakāraṇya to kidnap the gracious Sītā (*taiyalai…koṇṭupōntu keṭṭāṉ*[31] "kidnapped the lady to ruin him"). Our reckless king, he committed a grave crime that ruined him… Thou, Rāma are the righteous king of the dignified family of kings of the Solar Race. What is the use of talking of this degraded den of demons that devastated the island by injustice done to women? Rāma, Thy deeds please the minds of the celestials of the universal frame...".

10.2.4. "…'This lady (Sītā) shall prove fatal (poison) for the demonic race (*nañcu tāṉ arakkar kuṭik keṉṟu naṅkai*[32])' was the advice of Rāvaṇa's younger brother, Bibhīṣaṇa… Sītā is a peahen enslaved in the fragrant *aśoka*-garden. She is gifted with spread out dark locks of hair. You, heroes from Ayodhyā, are free to take her away (relieved of imprisonment)…".

10.2.5. "Rāvana kidnapped 'the goddess known as Sītā' (*cītai eṉpatōr teyvam*[33]), imprisoned her in a new fragrant garden, the crime

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[30] *Patavurai*: *cittam* (*siddha*) mind, *maṅkai* woman, *yarpāl vaittuk* going after (or concentrated on), *keṭṭāṉ* ([he was] ruined.
[31] *Patavurai*: *taiyalai* the lady, *koṇṭu pōntu* carried away, *keṭṭāṉ* ruined.
[32] *Patavurai*: *nañcu tāṉ* it is poison, *arakkar* demons', *kuṭik* family (clan), *keṉṟu* for, *naṅkai* (the) lady.
[33] *Patavurai*: *Cītai* Sītā, *eṉpatōr* one called, *teyvam* (divinity) Goddess.

that ultimately resulted in the end of the hero. His associates, Kuṃbha and Nikuṃbha were annihilated. The God of Death appeared in the divine form (*divyamaṅgala-svarūpa*) of Rāma…” .

10.2.6. “… We (the *rākṣasa*s) did not surrender Devī-Sītā to the messengers of peace from Ayodhyā. The envoy *vānara*-Hanumat was insulted. We are pitiable suffering creatures. We are worried…”.

10.2.7. “… The princess, Sītā was graced with the hip of *vañci*-creeper (Indian willow, Salix tetrasperma) and the eyes of gazelle. The foolish dignitary (*matiyil maṉattaṉ* “idiotic minded”), Rāvaṇa was not diplomatic to surrender the Lady. Poor fellow, the esteemed king of Laṅkā, let him be honourably killed. Lord Rāma, do afford us protection; Thou, the [blue]-gem-hued we surrender under Thy feet…”.

10.2.8. “Rāvaṇa’s busy harem was filled with gracious damsels (e.g. Maṇḍodarī[34]) gifted with fish-like eyes. Rāvaṇa did not care to enjoy the embrace of his soft-breasted mistresses. He was a lowborn sadist (*puṉmaiyāḷaṉ*[35]) that imprisoned the peahen-like

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[34] Maṇḍodarī like Tārā, wife of Vāli, was a virtuous woman, known in Tamil tradition as Pattiṉi (cf. Rajarajan 2016: 62-65). Vālmīki says while returning in *puṣpaka-vimāna* back home, Rāma and Sītā alighted in Kiṣkindha on the banks of Pampā for some time. Sītā was pleased to take with her chaste *vānara*-women to Āyodhyā (Rajarajan 2014: 10 citing Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa*, *Yuddhakāṇḍa*, *Sargaḥ* 123, vv. 23-25). Āryan, Drāviḍian or any race on earth all men are not bad (prodigal) and all women are not good (chaste). See Tirukkuṟaḷ (54 any edition of G.U. Pope’s translation): *peṇṇiṉ peruntakka yāvuḷa kaṟpeṉum tiṇmai uṇṭākap periṉ*.

[35] *Puṉmai* “meanness, lowness, vileness” (*Tamil Lexicon*, V, p. 2813); denotes *nīca = mleccha*, Tamil *iḻipiṟappāḷaṉ* or *iḻiciṉan* “low-born” noted

damsel-Sītā, a free bird in the forest asylum. His heart was pierced with arrows of lust when injustice was meted out to women…".

10.2.10. "… We are broadcasting 'Hail Flourishing Laurels' to our Lord Rāma, savior of Sītā; Emperor of Bharata-*varṣa*." Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār adds: *immaiye iṭarillai* "No more harm haunts in this birth if Rāma is coming back to Ayodhyā".

10.3.4. "Rāvaṇa is always immersed in the delight of women: *mātarkaḷ atarattai puṇarta cintaip puṉmaiyāḷaṉ*[36]. His mind is engrossed in thoughts of the enjoyment of women. His body was shattered to pieces in war by discharging powerful missiles. Let us sing the Praise of the princes of Ayodhyā."

10.3.7. "Ye, the *rākṣasa*s of Laṅkā do not talk vainglories. Try to protect you from the Rāma-*bāṇa*… The great hero, Hanumat hails from the primeval honoured family; say 'Hail Victory to the Lord Māruti'…".

Several other hymns could be cited to prove the libido of Rāvaṇa. These are pointers of the fact that Rāvaṇa ruined his own self by his injudicious justice meted out to women.

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in *Puṟanāṉūṟu* 170, 82 (Rajarajan 2001: 786, citing Vālmīki-*Rāmāyaṇa*, *Araṇyakāṇḍa*, *Sargaḥ* 51, v. 6).

[36] *Patavurai: mātarkaḷ* several women, *atarattai* [*] lips (lower lips, lower part: pudendum? *Peruñcollakarāti*, I, p. 190), *puṇarta* had congress (kiss or sexual intercourse), *cintaip* mind (always steeped in such thoughts), *puṉmaiyāḷaṉ* low-graded person.

[*] This word contextually may denote the pudendum, that is to say Rāvaṇa was always steeped in thoughts of sexual intercourse with women.

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2.
Figures

Fig. 1

A 18th Century Tañcāvūr Nāyaka-Marāṭha painting with the title Āti Nārāyaṇaṉ - Virāta Vicuvarūpam, from Kuldip Singh’s Collection, note the genealogy of *deva*s and *asura*s on both sides of the main image’s knee-level (after Dallapiccola, K. Singh and R.G. Singh 2018: fig. 5.33).



Fig. 1a. detail of Fig. 1, note Pulastya-Brahmā with his consorts Titi and Atiti, and the progeny Hiraṇya, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Rāvaṇa.



Fig. 2. Kṛṣṇa as baby:

a) Santāna Gopāla, Kaḷḷarpirāṉ Temple, Vaikuntam



b) Vaṭapatraśāyī, Sāṛṅgapāni Temple *tēr* ‘car’, Kuṃbhakōnam



Fig. 3. Pūtanājīvitahara:

a) southern (fifth) *gopura*, Śrīraṅgam

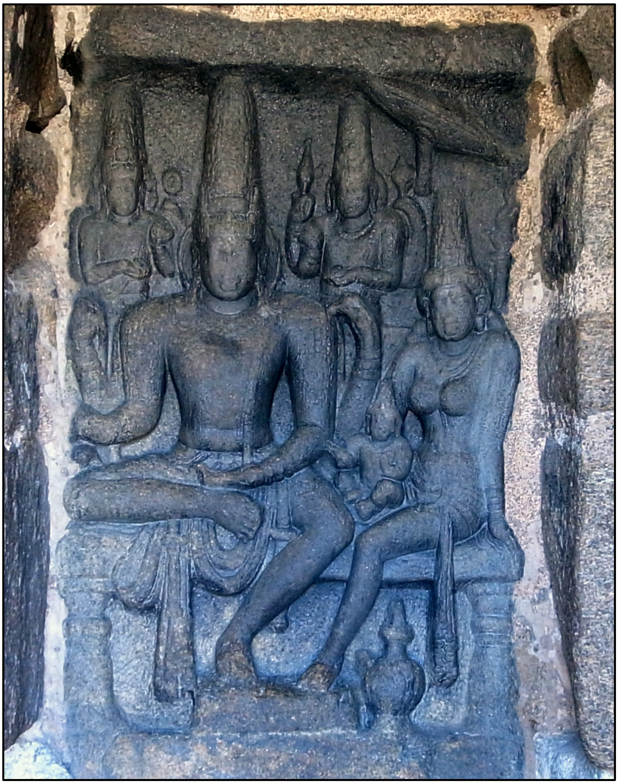


b) Kaḷḷarpirāṉ Temple *gopura*, Vaikuntam



Fig. 4. Somāskanda:

a) Pallava, Māmallapuram



b) Cōḻa bronze (© Norton Simon Museum, California)



Fig. 5. Mātṛkas fondling babies, Ravan-ka-khai, Ellora
(© AIIS, New Delhi)



Fig. 6. Anasūyā feeding Trimūrtis as babies, modern painting, Kṛṣṇa-Sudama Temple, Porbandar



Fig. 7. Viṣṇu as Ardhanārī, Śrīraṅgam Temple *tēr* ‘car’



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The 'Static' and the 'Dynamic' in Vaiśeṣika's Eschatology

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Abstract: A common tendency in assessing Indian eschatology is to view it as an endless cyclic process, within which time, transformations, and cosmic relocations have the last word. This current paper aims to dispel such broad generalisations, and by looking into the ontological status of some primeval 'substances' (ākāśa, ātman) in relation to certain phenomenological processes (sṛṣṭi, saṃhāra) it aims to show nevertheless, that the static character of ātman presupposes an original realm of existence which is devoid of 'motion' (karman, kriyā). This eschatological state is niḥśreyasa, in which term I have identified what Halbfass calls 'soteriontology'. Besides taking up on explaining perplexing semantic terms such as sṛṣṭi and saṃhāra, here I arguably maintain that Indian eschatology rests on two fundamental levels of ontological existence, one dynamic (saṃsāra), the other static (niḥśreyasa).

Keywords: saṃsāra, sṛṣṭi, saṃhāra, niḥśreyasa, ἀποκάλυψις, phänomenologische Aufhebung.

Introduction

In classical Indian philosophical systems theological themes such as 'eschatology' overlap frequently with cosmological inquiries (what is reality), as well as ontological (what is out there) or phenomenological (how, and what appears). The questions are driven primarily by the unescapable nature of 'action' (karman) and 'change' (be it pariṇāmavāda, or vivartavāda) by which ātman is engrossed in saṃsāra by forces which are beyond its control (niyati, daiva). It is from this existential 'Angst' that such interrogations develop, focussed to unlock the ultimate nature of the 'existing thing' (bhāva) and 'reality' (sattā).[1] The 'change'[2] that ātman undergoes is coextensive with the changes at a higher macrocosmic level, because for Vaiśeṣika, ātman is one of the nine fundamental 'substances' (dravya). Whether it transcends the cosmos or inhabits therein is a harder question to answer; it suffices to say that such crisis intensifies the uncertainty of the nature of 'reality' and the 'knowledge' itself; this would subsequently give rise to stern debates on the nature of reality among Indian realist and non-realist systems,

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[1] Often used interchangeably, bhāva designates in Vaiśeṣika an 'individualized existing thing', whereas sattā is a generic concept (universal) and designates 'everything that is real' (the padārthas).

[2] The change of the self refers to various transformations: the 'birth' (janman), 'life activity' (jīvana),'sentient organism' (jantu), all of which discussed in the context of saṃsāra.

alike.[3] Their respective views diverge, chiefly on account of different 'epistemological premises' (pramāṇa) which their worldview - often described in 'categories' (padārtha) - is built upon. This paper puts forward Vaiśeṣika, an old, realistic, and influential classical 'philosophical system' (darśana),[4] whose chief role is to supply an 'enumeration' (upasaṃkhyāna) of everything that has the character of being in the world.[5] These world categories, as Praśastapāda informs, have three major basic features: they possess existence '-isness' (astitva), 'knowability' (jñeyatva) and 'nameability' (abhidheyatva).[6] Mere classification however, is not sufficient; as Vādīndra Bhaṭṭa (thirteenth cent. AD) would later clarify, there are degrees of perception which vary

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[3] What is realist and non-realist systems is a matter of debate, but for convenience sake we classify here as realist: Vaibhāṣika Sarvāstivāda, Jaina, Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Cārvāka and some grammarian (Pāṇini and Patañjali); for idealist schools : Advaita Vedānta, Yogācāra Vijñānavāda, as well as the grammarian Bhartṛhari. All schools however defined and defended reality with different ontologies and epistemologies premises. The conflicting between the two camps can rightly be called 'the battle for reality', on which I shall deal with in a forthcoming paper.

[4] As to its significance and originality, Vaiśeṣika has been hailed by Thakur as an old and influential philosophical system comparable to Pāṇini's grammar (Thakur, Intro. VSc 1961).

[5] It is how Vyomaśiva, the earliest commentator of Praśastapāda, explains the intention of Kaṇāda's system. Vyo, Vol. 1 p. 47 (from Halbfass, 1992: 69, 82).

[6] See Praśastapāda's PD, 11 (ṣaṇṇām api padārthānām astitvābhidheyatvajñeyatvāni); Halbfass, 1992: 75–6, 154.

according to depth, authenticity and extension.[7] Post-eschatological liberation of ātman (niḥśreyasa) is achieved only as a result of grasping the authentic, or pure form knowledge (tattvajñāna). It appears that for Candrānanda,[8] the scope of the whole of ontological project (Vaiśeṣika)[9] - (be it cosmological or psychological) - is eschatologically driven.[10]

Terminology

Before proceeding, one must clarify first what the term 'eschatology' means in an Indian context. From both Religious studies and Greek classics, one could distinguish two related concepts; ἔσχατος on one hand, and ἀποκάλυψις on the other. On the first, ἔσχατος (adj. 'the uttermost', 'last'),[11] the classical Greek literature renders it with predominant 'existential',

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7 See VSc 9.28 who distinguishes between siddhadarśana and ārṣajñāna, whereas VSv of Vādīndra Bhaṭṭa 2.1.20 between 'indeterminate' (nirvikalpa pratyakṣa) versus 'determinate' (savikalpa pratyakṣa); but also PD of Praśastapāda who talks about 'simple perception' (svarūpālocanamātram) as opposed to 'differentiated perception' (savikalpa).

8 I refer primarily to his most valuable commentary (VSc) which is the earliest Vaiśeṣika commentary on the Sūtrapāṭha we possess at present.

9 Vaiśeṣika uses tattvajñāna; On Vaiśeṣika as 'ontological science' (padārthaśāstra), Harimohan Jhā, vol. 2. 1964: 4; Kumar 2014:92.

10 VSc 1.1.6: evaṁ ṣaṇṇāṁ padārthānāṁ sādharmyavaidharmyaparijñānaṁ viṣayadoṣadarśanadvāreṇa vairāgyotpattau satyāṁ niḥśreyase sādhye dharmahetuḥ.

11 Adjectival derivative of ἐξ (adv. prep. for 'outside') EDG (online); ἐσχᾰτεύω/ ἔσχᾰτος in both its temporal and spatial designations: 'to be at the end', 'the uttermost chamber', LSJ : 699.

'spatial',[12] 'temporal',[13] and 'qualitative'[14] references. It generally refers to a terminus point, either an event, or entity, and has a linear or cyclical historical estimation. As such, 'Indian eschatology' would then refer to a cycle, to the end of an 'age' (yuga), of a 'cosmic state' (bhūmi) into which at various stages a category of selves (preta) are trapped.[15] Obeyesekere calls it 'rebirth eschatology',[16] which nevertheless is only an aspect of a broader eschatological framework.[17]

In dealing with eschatology, a concept of liberation points always to a static and irreversible 'terminus point'. Since 'liberation' (e.g. nirvāṇa) is part of the eschatological picture, in this current paper I shall trace not only its dynamic aspect (cyclical transformations of the world), but more importantly, the static nature (ontology) or the irreversible state of being (soteriology). Though eschatology entails saṃsāric change and composition, Vaiśeṣika concept of 'production' (utpatti) or

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[12] Herodotus 3.106 describes India as the remotest country of the inhabited world; also Aristotle Cael. 298a14; see LSJ, 1968: 699.
[13] The Septuagint LXX 1 Ma. 5. 53, ἐσχᾰτίζω: 'to be last', 'to come too late'.
[14] Used by Aristotle (in Metaph. 998b16, 1059b26, 1058b10) to define 'the last or lowest species or individuals'; via LSJ online.
[15] On bhūmi as 'spheres of existence' (classified in three large groups) Collins, 1998, p. 297-98. One of the these contains levels of meditation called 'refined bhūmi' (rūpāvacara).
[16] Obeyesekere, 1980: 139.
[17] He points out for example, four aspects which eschatology entails : 1) the framework of saṃsāra (all living beings cycle); 2) a rebirth theory (which includes only humans); 3) a theory of karma (produced by ethical causes); and 4) a doctrine of salvation (mokṣa).

‘destruction’ (vināśa) might be only phenomenological, not ontological-essential transformations; while ātman is devoid of action, there seems to be yet acknowledged, within the theory of karma, a sort of state of differentiation, one by which the plurality of souls seems to manifest (VSc 3.2.16-17).

A second related term is ἀποκάλυψις,[18] which differently from ἔσχατος, carries in the Classical Greek literature, meanings close to the act of ‘disclosing’ of a being or thing.[19] We take it in a locative existential sense (because of ἀπό, prep. ‘far away, away from’)[20] but also as an epistemological act (ind. pres. καλέω ‘call, call by name, summon’).[21] The term is of course notorious for its biblical usage, in which sense it means the external ‘revelation’ of Christ given to John, from an angel.[22] In this sense it has a temporal future-

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[18] See for example: ἀποκᾰλύπτω, uncover the head’ (Hdt.1.119); disclose, reveal, (Pl.Prt.352a); unmask, (Luc.Cat.26, Vit.Auct. 23); while for ἀποκάλυψις, uncovering, of the head, (in Phld.Vit.p.38J); disclosing, of hidden springs (in Plu.Aem.14): revelation, especially of divine mysteries (Ep.Rom.16.25); of persons, manifestation, (Ep.Thess.1.7); title of the Apocalypse; (via LSJ: 201).

[19] Heidegger 1977: 92 for instance, sees ‘Disclosedness (Erschlossenheit) of Dasein as ‘being-in-the-world’; and Löwith 1966: 33, confirms that Heidegger’s existentialism is worldly, because it deals with ‘contingency’, ‘finiteness’; all of these aspects are prevalent topics in Vaiśeṣika’s cosmology.

[20] EDG (online).

[21] EDG (online).

[22] NTG online Rev. 1.1: Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ.

oriented designation, but in Vaiśeṣika and the Greek sources, the act of disclosing is predominantly gnostic-epistemological; for Praśastapāda the act of 'nameability' of world's categories draws closer to the Greek verb ἀποκάλεύω (to recall, or call by a name, from afar);[23] both suggest therefore an epistemological phenomenological orientation, which is traceable in Heidegger too, who regards ontology thinkable only as phenomenology (Erschlossenheit).[24] For him, 'being' is never a 'self-enlisted entity', but is always in relation to something else: 'being-in', 'being-of', 'being-and'.[25] In this regard Heidegger's phenomenology seems to have been influenced by both sources, classical Greek and theological eschatological, respectively.

Vaiśeṣika's eschatology is a process of 'epistemological uncovering' (tattvajñāna) of the ultimate nature of 'dravya' itself, yet not determined by temporality (John's Revelation 1.1) or relationality (as in Heidegger); it represents quite radically, the discovery of the reality in the permanent nature of the nine 'substances' (dravya) which subsist independently

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[23] LSJ : 201, references are being made here to Hdt. 3.53; Pl. Grg. 512c.

[24] Heidegger 1977: 84. The existential being is disclosed in the moods of man: joy, boredom, excitement, or anxiety (the latter is a malaise, not a fear).

[25] Ontology is possible only as phenomenology; being is not an object of intuition and definition (as in Vaiśeṣika); 'Dasein is there for itself in the 'how' of its own most being', Heidegger 1988: 5. The meaning of Dasein is analysed in the two-fold temporality (Zeitlichkeit) of the past and future: 'Dasein 'is' its past that actually 'occurs' out of its future', Heidegger, 1977: 64.

from their adventitious ‘qualities’ (guṇa) and ‘actions’ (karma-padārtha); as such, ontology seems to be static, non-temporal, non-relational; it does not entail a principle of movement as in Aristotle, or ‘ phenomenological disclosing’ bracketed from being (Epoché) as in early Husserl.[26] One example is ātman, whose ‘disclosing’ involves its separation from diverse manifestations (śarīra), its specific guṇas, including its ‘cognitive capacities’ (buddhi). In the ultimate state of Vaiśeṣika’s eschatology (niḥśreyasa), the dynamics of the substances (e.g. ātman), reach a state of complete stillness because no further compositions and transformations take place. Therefore, in this paper I shall take into loop such dimensions: one dynamic-phenomenological, and the other static-ontological, which seems to be exclusive (in niḥśreyasa) yet complementary (in saṃsāra).

[26] I refer here to ‘being-qua-being’ and the ontological discussion taken up again by Aristotle’s Physics II. 1, which clarifies that for something to be it must exist: 1) naturally, not by accident; 2) it must have a ‘principle of motion’ (Arist. Ph. 192b20) (via LSJ); the question of motion is also restated in Metaphysics, where the ‘essence’ of things ‘must have a principle of movement in themselves qua themselves’. trans. Ross, 1936: 349; the response of Aristotle to Empedocles ‘nature’, among other things, is defined as the attribute of things which are composed of matter and form (e.g. bronze is the nature of a statue) (Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Warrington trans. 1956: 8-9).

The ‘Limbo’ (lamba)[27] and the ‘Void’ (ākāśa)

The trouble in presenting a clear cut picture of Vaiśeṣika’s eschatology lies in the unsettled nature of the static and dynamic states of the ‘cosmos’, namely in the composite and non-composite nature of substances, of which we should first mention the ātman. Cosmogony and Eschatology are interdependent; death is coextensive with a new birth or afterlife;[28] ātman cannot die, but is not ‘liberated’ either. Since bondage and cycle involve more than one death, it follows that there must be also more than one birth, the ‘theory of rebirth’ becoming thus a subsequent addition into the Brahmanic eschatology. From a philosophical perspective we may say that in the saṃsāric system, the end is not really an end, while the beginning is not really a beginning; the same may be thought about the Vedic workings of death and rebirth.[29]

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[27] MW: 897 defines it as ‘an arc between the pole of any place and the zenith’; close similarities with the ‘eon’ in Gnosticism and Aristotle’s parallel universes maybe drawn. This is not a term used directly; but there are passages where ‘lamba’ is implicitly recognisable (VSc 5.2.14 and PD 57).

[28] This has been pointed out by the sociologist Robert Hertz, 1960: 76-79, whose comparative study on the Indonesian tribe Olo Ngaju shows that death is seen not as a physical event, but rather as a social or spiritual process of exclusion always followed by a new integration.

[29] Doniger, 1980: 3-4 (based on Knipe, 1977) shows that the ‘theory of rebirth’ as expounded in the oldest sources (the Vedic hymns) is a later addition than the theory of ‘re-death’; the latter developed from some elaborated funeral ritual for deceased ancestors (śrāddha, sapiṇḍīkaraṇa) in order to prevent them to suffer ‘repeated death’ (punarmṛtyu).

In this cosmological framework one grim aspect was the fate of individuals which after their own death, for some karmic-ethical reasons, could not fit into any 'cosmic layer' (bhūmi), or even worse, kept on haunting the earth as ghosts (preta).[30] 'Death rituals' (antyeṣṭi saṃskāra) are in such circumstances instrumental in easing the journey of the deceased,[31] by granting a cosmic upgrading (abhyudaya) to these 'subtle bodies' (jantu, ativāhikaśarīra).[32] In relation to

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[30] See VSc 5.2.14; or PD 57 in which passage Praśastapāda mentions 'all those beings wearied by their wanderings' (saṃsārākhinnānāṃ sarvaprāṇināṃ) presumably due to the impure composition of their subtle body, which needed 'fed' by rice-bull offerings in order to pass the cosmic layers.

[31] As Pandey, 1949: 464 explains, the Hindu belief is that in the Āśaucha period (following immediately after death) the self must be nourished with sacrificial food (piṇḍa, 'ball of rice' the symbol of the 'preta' body) in order to guide his path to the abode.

[32] One cannot but note in this Hindu eschatology, a remote resemblance with a much developed Romanian orthodox practice of offerings ('parastas') performed on the third, ninth, and fortieth day after death (as per Constitutiones Apostolorum 8.42), as well as on the third, sixth, ninth month, up to one year, and beyond. An anthropological research could show if the much elaborated funeral offerings have or not evolved in relation to an un-official theological belief in 'house-tolls' ('vămile văzduhului'); in more recent times, the Canadian bishop Lazar Puhalo revived a ninetieth century theological dispute (e.g. Theophan Zatvornik's rebuttal of Ignatius Brianchaninov teachings on death); Puhalo bluntly accuses Seraphim Rose of 'neo-Gnosticism' and his book 'The Soul after Death' (which exposes house-tolls theory) he charges as 'heretical', (1980) 2010: 140. Much can be said about the matter, but it suffices to say that such dispute arises not least because of a 'rigid' and 'static' view on these toll-houses, or heavens, a tendency visible among both camps. It would

'pretas' wandering the earth, or those stuck into a limbo,[33] the antyeṣṭi rituals develope for several causes: to establish the cosmic order troubled by such wandering selves (PD 57), to obtain heaven for them, or as Pandey states, 'from desperate refusal of mankind to accept the necessary end', or 'to averting death'.[34] The innovative development of the 'theory of re-death' brought forth the theory of re-birth; if, two deaths of the same individual can occur as the Vedas show, it must have been logically inferred that between two moments of death, there must be one more birth.[35] Thus the origin and development of the rebirth theory must be sought not only into a rigid and hierarchical view of cosmos, but also in the multitude of layers of existence which are overcome only through 'rites of passage'.[36] Among these, antyeṣṭi saṃskāra (death rituals) aim to upgrade and relocate the individual (preta) from a world to another; such relocations or state-alterations involve multiple

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also not harm to say that after all, 'toll houses' teaching is not a dogma, but more of a theologumena.

[33] Doniger 1980, p. 5, talks about a 'limbo' (different from saṃsāra) where those souls without offspring are stuck. Compare to the two categories of unsaved souls from VSc 5.2.14.

[34] Pandey, 1949: 408 , refers here to Āśvalāyana-Gṛhyasūtra (his reference is incomplete).

[35] In Vaiśeṣika this initiation, has from very early, both an eschatological and soteriological relevance.

[36] These 'transitions' happen at every stage of existence, before conception (garbādhāna), during pregnancy (puṃsavana), birth (jātakarma), youth initiation (upanayana) or first shaving of beard (keśanta) to name just a few. See Pandey, 1949.

‘re-births’ in different cosmic layers, each one consisting of a different substantial or ‘chemical’ composition.[37]

As it had been mentioned earlier, death is ‘almost always’ succeeded by a new birth. Yet, two eschatological passages, one by Candrānanda (VSc 5.2.14) and the other from Praśastapāda (PD 57), mention about a class of selves which after death do not seem to find successfully a cosmic layer to dwell in. Thus, one may investigate if the ‘selves whose body has been destroyed’ (vinaṣṭaśarīrāṇāmātman) (VSc 5.2.14) are those of whom Doniger says to be individuals stuck into a limbo, which is a suspended non-soteriological state.[38] The eschatological passage of Candrānanda in fact speaks of two classes of selves. First, a class of yogis, who are presumably able to prevent further rebirth due to their powers,[39] namely by effort of their mind (manas) which ‘remains exceedingly fixated’ (vyatiricyāvatiṣṭhamāna) into the soul (VSc 5.2.17).[40]

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[37] See for instance VSc 4.2. which gives a classification of different bodies according to specific dharma (VSc 4.2.5), or specific effect (VSc 4.2.6); there does not appear to be a direct relation between beings of the various cosmic regions (VSc 4.2.4) and a particular passion (VSc 6.2.16).

[38] Doniger 1980: 5.

[39] Jhā 1916: 648; PD 359. Yogis who can by their powers transport themselves in any desired place.

[40] VSc 5.2.17 refers to the two-fold psychological effects which yoga produces: the separation of the soul from senses (vairagya) on the one hand, and fixation of the mind into soul (abhyasa) on the other; the passage is: yadā hy ātmani mano’vasthitaṁ n’endriyeṣu tadā catuṣṭayasannikarṣasyānārambhāt tat kāryayoḥ sukhaduḥkhayor abhāvarūpo vidyamānaśarīrasya ātmano vāyunigrahāpekṣa ātmano manasā

Second, there is a group of selves whose 'body' (śarīra) had been destroyed at the end of an era but which now are unable to obtain a new body.[41] Furthermore, Praśastapāda presents in mythological terms, one of the reasons for which Brahmā decides to 'dissolve'[42] the world (PD 57): because of 'all those beings afflicted in their wanderings' (saṃsārakhinnānāṃ sarvaprāṇināṃ); the distressful state of such selves presumably disturb the 'sleep' (niśi) of Brahmā,[43] for which cause he decides the creation of a new age order.

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saṃyogo yogaḥ / yogāṅgaṁ prāṇāyāma karma kiṁ n'oktam (translation: when the steady-mind is in the soul and not in the senses, then there is non-occurrence of a four-fold contact the result of these two [situations] is in the form of the absence of pleasure and pain, yoga is the conjunction between mind and soul, which depends on a breathing technique in ātman with a real body).

41 VS 5.2.14: agner ūrdhvaṁ jvalanaṁ vāyoś ca tiryak pavanam aṇumanasoś cā'dyaṁ karm'ety adṛṣṭa kāritāni / VSc: agner adhasthāne tiryag vā gamane pacyamānasyābhasmībhāvas syāt; apāṁ tathā vāyor atiryag gamane pūyamānadravyāṇām pavanā bhāvaḥ; agneś cā prabodhaḥ vinaṣṭaśarīrāṇām ātmanāṁ sargādau pṛthivyādiparamāṇuṣu ādyaṁ paraspar'opasarpaṇakarma na syāt; tathā labdhabhūmīnāṁ yogināṁ kalpānte abhisandhāya prayatnena manaḥ śarīrād vyatiricyā'vatiṣṭhamānānāṁ sargādau navaśarīrasambandhāya manasa ādyaṁ karma na bhavet adṛṣṭād ṛte / tasmād agner ūrdhvaṁ jvalanaṁ, vāyoś ca tiryak pavanam, aṇūnāṁ c' opasarpaṇa karma manasaś cādyaṁ karma etāni prāṇinām adṛṣṭakāritāni.

42 Gangānātha Jhā translates with 'reabsorb'; this is a rather confusing rendering because reabsorption (a form of inhalation), is antithetical to exhalation, which for instance the 'blazing purifying act of fire of earth atoms' designates by pṛthivyudakajvalanapavanānām.

43 PD 57 …brāhmaṇe mānena varṣaśatānte vartamānasya brahmaṇo'pavargakāle saṃsārakhinnānāṃ sarvaprāṇināṃ niśi

Now both these classes, 'wandering selves' (vinaṣṭaśarīrāṇām ātmanāṁ) and 'extra-telluric yogis' (labdhabhūmīnāṁ yogināṁ) respectively, are said to be stranded in ākāśa which is the 'void' of the universe. In Vaiśeṣika's ontology it is considered to be an 'all-pervasive' (vibhu) substance in the likewise manner as ātman is (VSc 7.1.28-29). Being 'all pervasive' implies also that 'motion' (kriyā) cannot be ontologically part of its essence;[44] as VSc clearly states, ātman is alongside kāla, diś, and ākāśa 'devoid of motion' (niṣkriya) (VSc 5.2.23). As ātman is by definition devoid of action, the question is how should we account for the fact that these 'selves' still wander. From VS 2.1.16 we know that 'sound' (śabda) is a 'quality' (guṇa) of ākāśa; yet a further question remains as to the nature of the noise which selves, who wander in distress (saṃsārakhinnānāṃ sarvaprāṇināṃ), make to disturb Maheśvara's sleep (PD 58). These selves must be of a subtle form, and since they move, they must be distinguished from ātmans which, as mentioned earlier are niṣkriya. It follows that both Candrānanda and Praśastapāda refer here not to ātman, both rather to a category of selves which are lost an intermediate state, presumably a

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viśrāmārtham sakalabhuvanapater maheśvarasya saṃjihīrṣāsamakālam śarīrendriyamahābhūtopanibandhakānām sarvātmagatānām adṛṣṭānām vṛttinirodhe sati maheśvarecchātmāṇusamyogajakarmabhyaḥ śarīrendriyakāraṇāṇuvibhāgebhyas tatsamyoganivṛttau teṣām āparamāṇvanto vināśaḥ.

[44] On substances like ākāśa, kāla, diś and ātman as being niṣkriya, see: VSc 5.2.23.

limbo (though ‘lamba’ is not directly mentioned), or trapped as it were in an non-soteriological suspended state. We need to see in these ‘wandering selves’ not souls, but rather ‘psycho-physical entities’ which likewise a ‘subtle body’ are able to move and experience pain.[45] Thus, for cosmology the problem of change is coextensive with the problem of suffering.[46] Within Indian eschatology we are often confronted with the ongoing dilemma of a soul besieged in time, manifested in static and dynamic states of existence, or between polarities, such as ‘pleasure’ and ‘pain’, ‘desire’ and ‘aversion’, and so on. Hindu cosmology of the outerworld, which is an enormous strata of layers and spheres of existence, should not be reduced to an infinite cyclical process. If, there is such a thing as an ultimate irreversible state like liberation which as Vaiśeṣika maintains is meta-cosmic, then, there must yet be another original and transcendental state where motion and

[45] Pandey, 1949: 465; Doniger 1980: 6, also points out elsewhere, that the passage of a ‘migratory self’ (preta) into a better world (e.g. Pitṛs loka) would be possible only if it had been fed with piṇḍa (in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇa saṃskāra). There is plenty of evidence about these selves, - often associated with ‘ghosts’ (‘preta) – namely in the prescriptions of ‘funeral rituals’ (antyeṣṭi saṃskāra) performed for the benefit of the departed, who are still able to eat (due to their subtle body), roam around the household, or exists simply stuck between cosmic layers (as an outcast).

[46] It is also symptomatic to see that the composition (either atomic or gross) was associated to change and suffering. Ātman becomes devoid of suffering only when it annihilates its compositional aspects including fourfold cognition, absorption of manas, or discards the gross and subtle atomic body (jantu, jīva, or ativāhikaśarīra).

cycles no longer exist; this motionless state is ‘niḥśreyasa’ for ātman, while for substances such as ākāśa, diś, kāla, an all pervasive, non-composite and simple ontological state, grasped through ‘intuitive knowledge’ (ārṣajñāna) (VSc 9.28).

Sṛṣṭi and Saṃhāra

The phenomenology of Vaiśeṣika described by its ‘categories’ (padārtha) is attached to the dynamics between ‘cosmogony’ (sṛṣṭi) and ‘eschatology’ (saṃhāra), two major events discussed often in close interdependency. Both involve ‘action’ and ‘change’, and it is symptomatic to see that, whenever Vaiśeṣika sources (VSc and PD) describe their interchangeable process, the ‘theory of karma’ crops in and carries with it a series of ethical, physical, and soteriological implications.[47] One conspicuous term therein is adṛṣṭa, which seems to arbitrate – independently (in VSc) or operated by Maheśvara (in PD) - the cosmic processes of sṛṣṭi and saṃhāra. Sṛṣṭi (cosmic production/re-arrangement) is described by Praśastapāda by means of a cosmogonic myth (PD 58),[48] in the same context with eschatology (PD 57), namely in the section ‘sṛṣṭisaṃhāraprakaraṇam’ which deals

[47] Obeyesekere, 1980: 138, suggests that the ethical aspect (‘ethicization’) is a later addition into the theory of rebirth and karma. For the physical, Halbfass, 1980: 289 states, adṛṣṭa was postulated as an explanation (‘gap filler’) for cosmic laws, in lack of other explanations; while for the physicalist soteriology, Houben, 1994:731.

[48] See earlier footnote which gives the whole of Candrānanda’s gloss (VSc 5.2.14).

with the creation and destruction of the original atomic mahābhūtas. This is the context where the fate of 'wandering' selves is mentioned. Among the three leading Vaiśeṣika commentarial traditions,[49] it is Praśastapāda (sixth cent. BC) who introduces 'god' into the system as the efficient cause of the cosmos.[50] Candrānanda (seventh to tenth cent. AD),[51] though not ignoring the role of Maheśvara,[52] explains the world's composition and dissolution as effected only by the impersonal invisible force called adṛṣṭa (VSc 5.2.14).[53] In Praśastapāda's myth, the 'dissolution' of the cosmos is triggered by the lack, or for the sake of Brahmā's 'sleep' (PD 58), while 'cosmogony' is presented as a product of

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[49] There three main scholastic traditions; Sūtrapāṭha (that follows VS), Bhāṣya (follows PD) and Independent (the 'school' which introduced quite boldly further categories, e.g. DP and SP).

[50] Yuktidīpikā (YD 88, 5; see also 87, 23) informs that the Vaiśeṣikas borrowed their 'theism' from the Pāśupatas. On Praśastapāda's theistic turn in the system, see also Chemparathy 1965, p. 146; both eschatology and cosmogony are not only effected by the workings of adṛṣṭa (as Candrānanda's VSc 5.2.14 describes), but for Praśastapāda, these are ultimately effected by Brahmā; the influence of Śaivism is evident: both commentators acknowledge Maheśvara as their supreme god.

[51] On the date of VSc, see Aklujkar, 1970.

[52] He discusses it in a concluding context, e.g. VSc 10.21: tanubhuvanādikāryatayā vijñāto bhagavān īśvaraḥ tatpraṇayanāc cāmnāyasya siddhaṁ prāmāṇyaṁ / 'iti' śabdaḥ samāptyarthaḥ / evaṁ dravyādīnāṁ sādharmyavaidharmyaparijñānād vairāgyajñān'otpatter 'ātmā jñātavya' ityādi vākyebhyaś c'pāsākramena vijñānāvāpter niḥśreyasādhigamaḥ.

[53] See earlier quotation of VSc 5.2.14.

Maheśvara's 'conscious' state of mind.[54] Creation of the cosmos, as Jhā translates, arises in the mind of Maheśvara 'for the sake of the experiences to be gained' by the 'wandering selves'; by using the dative singular 'bhogabhūtaye', Jhā alludes here to the karmic law which requires the 'consumption' of the fruits (phala) of actions (karmic residue) for which reason, under the karmic law, these unredeemed selves are doomed to 'distressful wandering' (saṃsārakhinnānāṃ), most likely into the 'void' (ākāśa).

In order to understand the present two-fold eschatology, one should be first familiarised with the 'dualistic' classification of the nine fundamental 'substances' (dravya) of the real world.[55] 'Cosmogony' (sṛṣṭi) and 'dissolution'

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[54] PD 58: tataḥ punaḥ prāṇināṃ bhogabhūtaye maheśvarasisṛkṣānantaraṃ sarvātmagatavṛttilabdhādṛṣṭāpekṣebhyas tatsaṃyogebhyaḥ pavanaparamāṇuṣu karmotpattau teṣāṃ parasparasaṃyogebhyo dvyaṇukādiprakrameṇa mahān vāyuḥ samutpanno nabhasi dodhūyamānas tiṣṭhati.

[55] I suggest in fact a tripartite classification of composite versus non-composite substances, which have the void (ākāśa) as a support. There are nine basic substances (dravya) in Vaiśeṣika (VS 1.1.4); their classification should, in my opinion, be seen as follows: 1) the group of compositional-dissolutive: Earth (pṛthivī), Water (ap), Lustre/ Fire (tejas), Air (vāyu). 2) the group of non-compositional-all-pervasive: time kāla, space diś, soul ātman; mind (manas); and 3) void (ākāśa), which is a special substance which, differently from space, could be considered as either a substratum for all of them, or just the gap that separates them from becoming simultaneous or merged to each other, (DP 238 discusses viśeṣa in relation to ākāśa) which would contravene to the basic characteristic of the system, that presents an absolute pluralistic view on the nature of the world and its fundamental constituents.

(saṃhāra) works at a very subtle, minute level of the cosmic matter; the 'atoms' (aṇu) of a concrete body (mūrta) seem to be kept together by a cosmic 'magnetic' karmic force called adṛṣṭa. Curiously, the term for 'creation' (sṛṣṭi), does not designate the making of something solid, compact, or concrete, but on the contrary, it designates 'emission', 'letting loose', or 'giving away';[56] the sense given by this translation is not product-orientated, but rather producer-orientated. Sṛṣṭi designates the author (Maheśvara) and not the effected product itself. Creation is a nominal or epistemic act (abhidheya). 'Dissolution' (saṃhāra) on the other hand, designates a reverse process of 'binding', 'coalescing', 'cleaving'.[57] Therefore, eschatology is a retrieval, or 'absorption' into an original starting point, perhaps to the very locus where cosmogony commenced.[58] The slippery use of language and the inverted meaning which sṛṣṭi and saṃhāra contain, shows in fact the interchangeability of cosmogony and eschatology as intimately part of the same cosmic cycle. Related to this complementarity we should perhaps explain why Jhā translates saṃhāra with

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[56] Apte, dict: 1701.

[57] Apte, dict: 1599, translates it with 'bringing together', 'collecting', 'withdrawing'.

[58] According to Paul Dirac' radiation theory, the 'creation 'of photons happens in the process of 'emission' of light, whereas the 'destruction' of photos when light is 'absorbed'; the same pattern of creation and destruction is followed by other elementary particles as well. See Fermi 1951: 1, 6.

'reabsorption',[59] possibly because he associates the cosmogonic process with the two-fold prāṇāyāmic yogic activity of 'exhalation' (prāṇa) and 'inhalation' (apāṇa).[60] Indeed, 'breathe', 'speech' both of which have a grammatical-cosmogonic function (e.g. abhidhyāna),[61] appears to be Maheśvara's medium of creation (PD 59).[62]

In the same cosmogonic myth as rendered by Praśastapāda (PD 59) we have two modes of creation to which corresponds two different agents of creation. One creation belongs to Maheśvara, the other to the Great Egg (mahadaṇḍam) also called the 'Four-Faced-Lotus Brahman' (caturvadanakamalaṃ brahmāṇaṃ). To this Brahman, which is his progeny, Maheśvara 'appoints' (viniyuṅkte) the distinction of 'great father of all worlds and creatures' (sarvalokapitāmaha) which involves the duty to create the rest of the highly ordered

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[59] One might well recognise here a process by which a yogi, when performs a breathing technique (pratyāhāra), entails exhalation (creation) and inhalation (dissolution) of the prāṇa ('breath', is often associated with The First Egg, Hiraṇyagarbha); as we shall see, exhalation is rather associated with the act of blazing of fire rather than air; the Vaiśeṣikas follow the Śaiva tradition; and as such, fire would play an important role into the formation and dissolution of atoms and cosmos.

[60] VS 5.2.18: kāya karmaṇātma karma vyākhyātaṁ / VSc: ihā'tmaśabdena vāyuḥ yathātmasaṃyogaprayatnābhyāṁ haste karma tathātmavāyusaṃyogāt prayatnāc ca prāṇāpāna karma /

[61] Apte dict: 173 'abhidhyāna' is one of the three powers of language (alongside 'lakṣaṇa' and 'vyañjana')

[62] Between 'exhalation' and 'inhalation', there is 'retention' of breath, which is an important state with a strong static and soteriological implications.

cosmos. Between the two, there is a difference as regards both the production and mode of conception.

First, Maheśvara deals with the formation of the Great Egg, and the mahābhūtas, which are the 'basic stuff' out of which 'all worlds' (sakalabhuvanāṇa) are subsequently created by Brahman (the Great Egg).[63] The production of the 'Great Egg' (which contains all worlds) is brought to fruition by a combination of atoms of fire and earth (taijasebhyo'ṇubhyaḥ pārthivaparamāṇusahitebhyo mahadaṇḍam ārabhyate).

Second, the creation of mahābhūtas and the Great Egg proceeds simply from Maheśvara's act of naming (maheśvarasyābhidhyānamātrāt). As it is known, abhidhyāna is one of the three powers of speech;[64] here we may underline the importance of language and its function of naming, designating, not only in ritual, but in the cosmic act of creation as well.[65] Yet, as Praśastapāda shows, there seems to be yet another type of creator and creation, that of Brahman (The

[63] PD 59: evam samutpannenṣu caturṣu mahābhūteṣu maheśvarasyābhidhyānamātrāt taijasebhyo'ṇubhyaḥ pārthivaparamāṇusahitebhyo mahad aṇḍam ārabhyate.
[64] The other two are lakṣaṇa, and vyañjana.
[65] This cosmic implication is evident in upanayana saṃskāra (becoming Dvija, twice born) but also in the mantras associated to the, See Jaiminiya Brahmana 3.14. 8.

Great Egg), which is both produced and the producer of the subsequent 'worlds' and 'beings' (loka, prāṇin, bhūta).[66]

It is at this stage where the actual highly structured Vedic universe is produced, arranged as it were, in four classes (caturo' varṇān) and many other layers inhabited by beings according to their low or high moral or material status (coccāvacāni bhūtāni), the Prajāpatis, Manus, Rṣis, and Pitṛs. Praśastapāda pledges that the arrangement of these 'beings' (prāṇin) into such a stern classification (one might say unfair) is made by Brahman,[67] only after having known the 'ripening' of karma of each one of these (prāṇinām karmavipākam viditvā), and in accordance with their mental residual impressions (āśayāṇurūpair). Though in this context Praśastapāda does not mention adṛṣṭa (as VSc 5.2.14), once again, the theory of karma is a hefty ethical determinant factor for the fate of these selves.

As a result, in this cross-cultural comparative philosophy study, one simple but fundamental question should be addressed, namely as to what is the nature of reality, its

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[66] PD 59: …tasmiṃś caturvadanakamalam sarvalokapitāmaham brahmāṇam sakalabhuvanasahitam utpādya prajāsarge viniyuṅkte. sa ca maheśvareṇa viniyukto brahmā'tiśayajñānavairāgyaiśvaryasampannaḥ prāṇinām karmavipākaṃ viditvā karmānurūpajñānabhogāyuṣaḥ sutān prajāpatīn mānasān maudevarṣipitṛgaṇān mukhabāhūrupādataś caturo varṇānanyāni coccāvacāni bhūtāni sṛṣṭvāśayāṇurūpair dharmajñānavairāgyaiśvaryaiḥ samyojayatīti.

[67] Hopefully, Brahman is righteous and ethically intended on account of his outstanding moral qualities: jñāna, vairāgya, aiśvarya.

‘ultimate stuff’, ‘substance’, and the ‘efficient cause’ (or agent) that triggers cosmos’ inception, composition and manifestation. In other words, is it substance (dravya), ‘matter’, or ‘reality’ really real? The change that the basic yet subtle ‘cosmic stuff’ undergoes both in the creation and dissolution processes, seems to confuse thought, because dissolution is in fact ‘binding’ (saṃhāra) while creation is ‘loosening’ (sṛṣṭi). The relationship between thought and reality, it is known historically, posed problems to several idealist systems (Advaita Vedānta, Yogācāra Buddhist); the presupposition of realist schools like Vaiśeṣika is that ‘things’ and ‘words’ are real and exist independently of conceptualisation; they must be taken for what they intrinsically are, not what they appear. In order to do that, Vaiśeṣika draws a distinction in the nature of a thing, between pure ‘thing’ (dravya), its composition (guṇas) and the ‘change’ (karma) which is effected by an external agent (adṛṣṭa). When ‘agent’ and ‘process’ come into play, things get blurred, both for ontology and epistemology. As Candrānanda shows, this ‘agent’ is not necessarily Maheśvara, but rather adṛṣṭa, an old concept with possible Vedic philosophical roots into concepts such as ‘dharma’ or ‘Ṛta’.[68] Since mahābhūtas are eternal, the

[68] MW: 519 dharati from √ dhṛ I. class P. ‘to hold, to bear, carry, maintain, preserve; or dādharti: to hold fast, to bear firmly, fasten, all of which similar in meaning and function with the Ṛta whose role is to maintain the world together. On Ṛta as ‘cosmic order’ and ‘ethical order’, see Renou,

role of the creator is secondary; in Indian philosophy there are other natural forces higher than gods themselves which in certain circumstances can regulate even gods' own destiny.[69] Whatever Ṛta may mean, its destiny and force is not implacable as, in the Greek classical thought, but rather suspended in the dissolution process, or the liberated state of the substance ātman (niḥśreyasa).

A further question now is concerning the question of the role of 'agent' in the Indian cosmogonic narrative. It seems that Maheśvara plays in early Vaiśeṣika a role comparable to what the Greek ποιητός (bard) designates,[70] which is different from the role 'ex nihilo' creator as the Judeo-Christian account of genesis has it (Gen 1.1-31).[71] In the classical Greek

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1953, p. 17-18; Koller, 1972, p. 135; de Smet, 1977, p. 53; for a similar interpretation of adṛṣṭa see VSc (which nevertheless is a broader concept because is responsible for the dissolution of cosmos as well).

69 VSc 5.2.14 shows that adṛṣṭa is a broader law responsible for creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world.

70 See EGD online: from the verb ποιέω 'to do, make, produce (e.g. of poetry), or to act'; whence the noun 'creator, producer, poet', especially of Homer, with -ητικός 'creating, poetic', ἡ -ητική (τέχνη) 'the art of poetry'; LSJ provides various other usages from the Greek classical literature; 'made into a son', 'adopted', (Pl.Lg. 878e, 923e); 'made by oneself', i.e. invented, feigned (Pi.N. 5.29); of works of art, 'imitated' (Nonn. D. 34.287).

71 There could be comparison for example between Maheśvara who creates the Great Egg by designation (naming) with Yahve of the Genesis 'Let it be' (1.1-31) who creates by simple uttering Light, Earth, Heaven and so on, or Logos (John 1.1). Nevertheless, one should not go as far as to identify or compare the Great Egg with Christ, 'the only begotten son of God'.

thought, ποιητός, as the agent, 'bard', or creator of poetry, has an ambivalent character; in the Odyssey for example, the poet is associated with the voice of truth, knowledge, or the power to 'describe, preserve and make pleasurable the truth'.[72] He is even 'the wise man' (σοφός)[73] who plays an advocacy role in the city (πόλις).[74] But there are also other less positive views; in Pindar (O. 1.28-29) poetry has the power to deceive, or to make unbelievable things believable (O. 1.30-32).[75] For the sake of truth, the poet is someone who must not be trusted fully.[76] Philosophy, the science committed to truth, must take distance from the 'childish passion for poetry'.[77] From the Greek classical corpus one aspect to retain is the simile of 'bard' with which the poet is likened in the Odyssey;[78]

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[72] Goldhill 1990:67.

[73] 'clever in practical matters', 'wise', 'prudent', (A.Fr.390); 'shrewd', 'worldly-wise' (Thgn.120, Pi.I.2.12, Hdt. 3.85).

[74] Edmunds 1985: 110 'The genre of Theognidean poetry', (via Figueira and Nagy eds. (1985).

[75] Via LSJ (online): 'Yes, there are many marvels, and yet I suppose the speech of mortals beyond the true account can be deceptive, stories adorned with embroidered lies; and Grace, who fashions all gentle things for men, confers esteem and often contrives to make believable the unbelievable. But the days to come are the wisest witnesses.'

[76] Plato's Republic, 10. 608a-b. (ed. J. M. Cooper, 1997) via LSJ.

[77] Plato's Republic (ed. G.M. A. Grube, rev. by C.D. C. Reeve) via LSJ.

[78] Odysseus praises the bard - either the Muse or Apollo must have taught him (Odyssey 8.489-91); 'bard' 'singer', 'minstrel' (ἀοιδοὺς) occurs in the Iliad 24.720, Od.3.270, but in Aristotle, Metaph. 983a4, bards are pictured negatively (they tell many lies 'πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοί, taking up proverb from Solon, see Ross 1948, vol. 2: 123).

ποιητός, this study argues, could be the closest meaning to which Maheśvara (as per PD 59) is compared. A 'bard' is beyond truth and false, beyond creation or dissolution, it is simply a 'versifier', a 'rhymer', one who sets in motion (or emotion), words and worlds. As we have seen, the emergence of the world is by the power of the 'word' (śabda) and 'designation' (abhidhyāna), which explains why in the Vedic and later śāstric thought, there is such a prevalent concern with grammar and change within language (between nouns and verbs, between words and objects), but more seriously in the realm of reality itself, as for instance within the changes of matter (prakṛti) from subtle to the concrete state (Sāṁkhya), from non-composite/simple to composite/differentiated (Vaiśeṣika). The differentiated state of being determines a marked emphasis on the 'knowability', 'existence' and 'designation' of the world constituents, all of which embedded in language. If the world is real, language too must be real; but do these two go together? is language real in Indian philosophy? What is its relationship with reality? Is it immanent or transcendent to it? Whatever may be the answer, we underline in relation to cosmogony, few considerations which could represent further subjects of reflection: 1) by comparison to the 'efficient cause' or the 'cosmogony' (sṛṣṭi), both reality and language transcend the causes as well as the creation and dissolution of cosmos; 2) Maheśvara as the cause or agent is the 'poet' of cosmos (ποιητός) not its creator ex-

nihilo; and 3) the substance of ātman is as a result a 'panentheistic' entity, because although it has no creative powers in itself, its ontological nature is both transcendent and immanent to reality and the world.

Earlier mention has been made about the atomic level at which both sṛṣṭi and saṃhāra work. Indeed, to understand eschatology and its negative phase (saṃhāra), the atomic theory of the formation of the world must be taken into account. If sṛṣṭi is the top-down process that forms reality from the most subtle to 'gross' groups of atomic clusters like dyads, triads, and so on, saṃhāra on the other hand is the reversal of such a process, namely the dissolution of the grossest part of reality, 'earth-bodies' disjointed into subtle atomic parts, down to the atoms of wind, which wind is the most subtle of mahābhūtas. The composition and decomposition processes happen because of the workings of adṛṣṭa which weakens (as in fission and fusion laws of nuclear physics) the 'relations' between the group of 'twos' (dyads) or 'threes' (triads) atomic particles. Praśastapāda says that Maheśvara sets in motions the atoms, while adṛṣṭa is the factor that operates them.[79]

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[79] The atomic process is described in PD 57-59 as follows: In sṛṣṭi we have the formation from top-down: first takes place the formation of the atoms of the most subtle substance vāyu, which through a process of atomic composition (dyads, triads) form the 'great air' (mahān vāyuḥ); then, through the same mechanism, Brahmā brings into a similar composition the formation of the 'great reservoir' of water (mahān salilanidhi), then the 'great mass of fire' (mahāṃs tejorāśiḥ) and so on.

A slightly different version of dissolution is given by Candrānanda who seems to obscure the role of Maheśvara within cosmology. Being arguably an older interpretation of the system, his commentary (VSc) describes the dissolution of the worlds composed by atoms of mahābhūtas yet only in the framework of adṛṣṭa, which for convenience sake, must be translated with 'cosmic law'.[80] The passages where this event emerges are VSc 5.2.14; VSc 6.2.18 and VSc 10.7-10. The term used in relation to 'eschatological dissolution' is principally a 'destruction' (vināśa)[81] - employed in VSc 2.2.29; 5.1.18; 5.2.4; 10.7-10 - and its related terms dhvamsa (VSc 9.3.5-6) and vadha (VSc 6.1.17; 7.1.16; 9.28) with which it must be associated. Furthermore, guṇas such as 'conjunction' (saṁyoga), 'disjunction' (vibhāga),[82] 'separateness' (pṛthaktva) (VS 1.1.23; 4.1.12; 7.2.1; 7.2.4, 8) are equally concepts that must be taken into account when

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Finally, as Praśastapāda informs, the formation of bodies (śarīra) is by a combination of fire with earth.

[80] As Halbfass 1980 shows, this should be interpreted in relation to the theory of karma, which is both ethical and cosmological.

[81] See Apte dict: 1445 (alternative meanings: ruin, utter loss, decay; removal , death (of perishable world).

[82] In addition and different from Arena's index (VSi), here I provide a list of places where the terms emerge together, and refer to the guṇas from the list of seventeen (or twenty-four): in sūtras 1.1.5, 15-16, 19, 23, 28; 2.2.36; 4.1.12, 5.2.12; 6.2.18; 7.2.12, 14. Within Candrānanda commentary the dual form 'saṁyogavibhāgau' is mentioned in: VSc 1.1.12-13, 15, 19; 2.1.1-5; 2.2.6, 12; 3.2.1, 17; 5.1.16-17; 6.2.18; 7.2.12-14.

describing the process. Finally, upasaṁhāra (VSc 3.1.6)[83] similarly to saṃhāra[84] designates a upper form of 'contraction', 'withdrawing', 'winding up', a process which entails 'destruction', 'end', or 'death'.[85]

There are two main aspects related to vināśa process; one is related to dravya-mahābhūtas, all explained earlier by the atomic theory; the other related to the dissolution of the qualities attached to these substances (dravya), a process described with the 'theory of pīlupākavāda', which is an equivalent to the atomic theory but applied to qualities (guṇa).[86] According to this theory, dissolution of the cosmic matter happens at the guṇic level too. The question is whether guṇas are produced or destroyed together with their

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[83] Though here VSc does not discusses upasaṁhāra in cosmological terms, but rather grammatical: it refers to the sutra 3.1.6 made the sake of 'concluding' a idea. Once again, the brevity of the language and the ideas employed by Candrānanda leaves much room to credit its doctrine as much older that Praśastapāda, even though its commentary (VSc) is dated by Aklujkar later. One should nevertheless judge the age of text from the internal evidence rather than rely on the archeology of Indian texts.

[84] Apte dict: 1599, translates it with 'bringing together', 'collecting', 'withdrawing'.

[85] Apte dict: 463; also MW: 208.

[86] The name of theory (pīlupākavāda) is given by Miyamoto 1996 (see DP). In discussing their permanent and impermanent nature, Candramati who is an early Vaiśeṣika commentator, says that guṇas can be both products and non-products (DP 121); because of their inherence (samavāya) into the eternal atoms (mahābhūtas) these guṇas are eternal and unchangeable as atoms themselves.

'substratum',[87] or as a Nyāya theory maintains,[88] are destroyed (and re-produced) without the dissolution and reconstruction of the substratum, which can be a substance like earth (clay pot). Though the two systems differ only in the mode of operation of the 'heat' (pāka) upon the cosmic dravyas and guṇas, both theories agree that the substratum and their qualities change. In this respect, the theory of pīlupākavāda reminds of a more popular 'theory of effect' (asatkāryavāda) which claims that effects (kārya) are real (like guṇas) and exist only as products of causes.[89] Of course, there are philological problems as to what 'asat' could mean in Vedic cosmology, because 'asat' may not designate sheer 'absence',[90] but rather an ontological 'undifferentiated entity'. In this case, asatkāryavāda may not advocate a 'prior non-existence' of an effect, but like piṭharapākavāda, upholds only a transformation of a guṇa one into another; for example colour is said to be 'destroyed', yet the same passage says that the red colour is subsequently produced.[91] Is it here a complete destruction of

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[87] I suppose this is what Miyamoto 1916: 14 means by 'whole' (e.g. a raw clay pot).
[88] The other theory is piṭharapākavāda, see Miyamoto, op. cit.
[89] If translated literally, asatkāryavāda would mean that the 'effects' are absent (asat) in the cause; effects 'pre-exist' in the cause is usually the widespread translation.
[90] Halbfass 1992: 32; Acharya: 2016:861-62.
[91] Miyamoto, 1996: 143 the passage he quotes is from PD 128: na ca kāryadravya eva rūpādyutpattir vināśo vā sambhavati sarvāvayaveṣv antar bahiś ca vartamānasyāgninā vyāptyabhāvād. aṇupraveśād api ca vyāptir na sambhavati kāryadravyavināśād iti.

red colour, or just a transformation of it? What stays and what changes, after all in Indian cosmology? Are guṇas 'transitory' (anitya) or 'permanent' (nitya)? Candramati, an early Vaiśeṣika protagonist (whose succinct text 'DP' has been preserved only in Chinese) sheds light on the role of guṇas on which he states to be both 'product' and 'non-product' (DP 118-119). Once again, 'product' (anitya) may not refer here (as in Indian philosophy more generally) the created thing (ex nihilo), but rather refers to its composite, frail nature; conversely 'eternal' (nitya), when applied to dravya may not refer to the nature of being 'eternal' but rather to its non-compositional and durable character as an entity; in other words, a substance can be both permanent and impermanent, but only its manifested state undergoes change. Similarly with the guṇas, because they are inherent in such substances, they can or cannot subsist eternally into these. Water for instance in a compositional state has guṇas, but whether atoms of water have guṇas remains debatable, since such knowledge is available only to extraordinary forms of knowledge, ārṣajñāna and yogipratyakṣa, respectively.

In the cosmological picture outlined so far, one could see a close correspondence between production and destruction, hence the concept of 'rebirth eschatology', but also an intriguing process of 'creation by dissolution' (sṛṣṭi) and 'destruction by emanation' (saṃhāra); more importantly, it shows an atomic or scientific 'frame of mind', by which

nature is introspected in minute detail to the point of fretting variation, where both language and reality interplay hypothetically and interchangeably. This fundamental view on cosmos and its ultimate constituents, if taken seriously, raises serious questions as to the nature of reality itself; if creation is 'loosening', it then follows that what appears as concrete is in fact unstable, impermanent, always prone to crack or decompose. Perhaps the greatest hurdle to deal with this at the conceptual level is the problem of 'change' in cosmology, at both micro and macro level; this ultimately leads reasoning to the mere refutation of reality itself, a question which idealist systems like Advaita Vedānta or Yogācāra Buddhist dealt each one in its own way.

Ātman (static) and Śarīra (dynamic)

The dialectics between the permanent and impermanent character of matter dominates the doctrine of ātman too. Given the dual character of the 'self', as composite (because of its śarīra) and non-composite in its original 'all-pervading form' (vibhu), a prevalent question raised by both nāstika and āstika systems is on account of locating the fix static soteriological state, and the causes which determine ātman (ultimately static, and motionless, VSc 5.2.23) to fall into a state of 'differentiation', 'composition', and 'change'

(saṃsāra).[92] Vaiśeṣika is generally known for its committed pluralistic presentation of reality, yet if analysed more closely, one could see that similarly to Sāṁkhya, dualism is a prevalent characteristic in both its ontology (entities that are nitya versus anitya ones) and epistemology (pratyakṣa, samavāya; sādharmya, vaidharmya). The way in which the system defines 'mortality' (anitya) of an entity is not by its capacity for extinction (as in Buddhist nirvāṇa) but rather in its incapacity of 'change'. Indeed, it is 'phenomenal change' which determines an entity to be or not to be 'eternal'. After all, as Halbfass states, asatkāryavāda (a theory which maintains the reality of creation and change) is nothing but another form of eternalism as expounded by Sāṁkhya's satkāryavāda.[93] Regarding the doctrine of ātman (in the embodied state) there is therefore no contradiction in asserting 'change' and 'composition' at the same time as 'non-composition' and 'non-action' (niṣkriya), as attributes which characterise the substance in Vaiśeṣika. This appears to be the case with almost all nine substances (except ākāśa),[94] which due to their various states of temporal and spatial existence

[92] VS 5.2.23: dikkālāvākāśaṁ ca kriyāvadbhyo vaidharmyān niṣkriyāṇi / VSc: ākāśa kāla diśo 'mūrtāḥ kriyāvataḥ pṛthivyāder amūrtatayā vaidharmyān niṣkriyāḥ, 'ca' śabdādātmā'pi niṣkriyaḥ.
[93] SK 9; Halbfass, 1992: 56.
[94] Whether ākāśa, which a positive vacuum sitting in the middle of the two groups of dravya (atomic versus all-pervasive) is a genuine mahābhūta in Vaiśeṣika, that remains debatable.

possess features of 'specificity' (viśeṣa) and 'universality' (sāmānya).[95] Ātman is one such dravya that undergoes within the dynamic eschatology (saṃsāra) a whole range of states which become attached to some concrete 'bodies' (śarīra) classified according to several criteria: birth,[96] dharmic,[97] atomic,[98] and biological,[99] to name just a few. Within the phenomenology of being, śarīra is a concept that seems to take in VSc different other designations, such as 'life activity' (jīvana),[100] 'sentient organism' (jantu) and its related term 'progenitor' (janman),[101] terms which designate the general

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[95] See VSc 4.2.9; Halbfass, 1992: 269-73 (appendix on viśeṣa).

[96] On classification of bodies in womb born, not womb born, see VSc 4.2.4: pārthivaṁ tu yonijam ayonijaṁ ca; of which not-womb born are made of atoms.

[97] VSc mentions a class made according to a specific dharma (dharmaviśeṣa) (VSc 4.2.4-5).

[98] There are bodies which differ according to their atomic composition, for example Varuṇaloka is the host of bodies made of water; while Aṅgiras' is the abode of bodies made of coal and fire.

[99] With regard to the biological category, śarīra category does not include vegetable beings (Halbfass, 1980: 291 f; from Praśastapāda's PD 1895: 27). VSc, on the other hand, speaks of a class of 'moths' or 'locusts' (śalabha).

[100] VSc 3.2.4; 5.1.11; 5.2.15, 20; PD 119, 295, 358; DP 152, 219.

[101] VS 6.2.18: tataḥ saṁyogo vibhāgaś ca / VSc: saṁcitau yadā dharmādharmau bhavataḥ tadā śarīrendriyaiḥ saṁyogo janmākhyo bhavati kṣīnayoś ca tayor maraṇakāle viyogaḥ / punarapyābhyāṁ dharmādharmābhyāṁ śarīrādisaṁyogo vibhāgaś c'ety evam anādir ayaṁ ghaṭīyantravad āvartate jantuḥ / etad viparītakrameṇo'ucyate, tathā hi. See also VS 5.2.20: tadabhāve saṃyogābhāvo'prādurbhāvaḥ sa mokṣaḥ / VSc: evaṁ rūpasyānādyapasarpaṇādinimittasyā'dṛṣṭasyābhāve

capacity of a ‘thing’ (tattva) for birth, biological life and corporal transformation. In line with the Upaniṣadic thought, which classified ‘birth-beings’ (bhūta) in three to four classes, respectively, Candrānanda draws a similar classification in VSc 4.2[102] and VSc 10.[103] He classifies them according to their atomic composition, birth, or dharma.[104] As such, bodies towards which ātman might be biologically attached are ordered into a strict ethic-hierarchal taxonomy placed as we

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jīvanākhyasyātmamanaḥ saṃyogasyābhāvo’nyasya ca śarīrasyāprādurbhāvo yaḥ sa mokṣaḥ; for ‘progenitor’ see Apte dict. 726.

[102] In VSc 4.2. Candrānanda offers a classification of the bodies (śarīra) as follows: Śarīra is a product of ‘material composition’ (śarīramahābhūta) (VSc 4.1.2); body is made of earth (VSc 4.2.1), but is indirectly ‘mixed’ with other ‘fundamental elements’ (mahābhūta) such as ‘water’ (jala), ‘fire’ and ‘wind’ (VSc 4.2.3) and because bodies go fittingly into various appropriate cosmic regions (anekadeśa) where they are found (VSc 4.2.4). 9) There are many such kinds of ‘bodies’, some of which are ‘not womb-born’, for instance those in Varuṇaloka, others not made of ‘semen’ (śukra) or ‘blood’ (śoṇita), but rather produced because of some ‘specific dharma’ (dharmaviśeṣa) (VSc 4.2.4-5). Others are the ‘body of insects’ (śalabha) (VSc 6.2.6), the bodies ‘born of coal’ (jāto’ṅgirā) (VSc 4.2.7), or the ‘body of the yogis’ seen as existing prior to a new world’s cosmogony (VSc 5.2.14,17).

[103] As for VSc 10, body is an effect, and as a result is analysed within the doctrine of asatkāryavāda, presented in VSc 10.7 under several similes such as ‘pot’ (ghaṭa), ‘thread’ (tantu), that show the relation of interdependence of concepts like ‘dependence’ (sāpekṣa) and ‘non-dependence’(anāpekṣa), as well as various causal-cosmological relations such as ‘production’ (utpatti) or ‘destruction’ (vināśa).

[104] VS 4.2.4 anekadeśapūrvakatvāt / VSc: anekadeśāḥ paramāṇavaḥ tair ārabhyate jalādiśarīraṁ na śukraśoṇitābhyām / tacca. / VS 4.2.5 dharmaviśeṣāt / VSc: dharmaviśeṣāpekṣāḥ paramāṇava eva śarīram ārabhante na śukrādi / kathaṁ hi puṇyavatāṁ śukrādimayaṁ śarīraṁ syāt / itaś ca.

see in PD 57-59 and VSc 4.2 in 'multiple regions' (anekadeśa),[105] 'cosmic layers' (bhūmi), 'worlds', 'heavens', 'spheres' (loka),[106] 'abodes', or 'residence' (bhuvana),[107] which presumably are temporary for the selves, because of the periodical age (yuga) dissolution (pralaya).[108] Each one of these 'layers of existence' possess a fixed substantial composition, and the re-location of the selves after death into each of these is determined by their own 'specific dharma' (VSc 4.2.5).[109]

Śarīra is the impermanent locus into which ātman, through the set of its psychological apparatus (the nine vaiśeṣikaguṇas)[110] and their attachment to manas, becomes entangled into saṃsāra (VSc 6.2.18).[111] Vādīndra (13th cent.

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105 VSc 4.2.4. anekadeśapūrvakatvāt / VSc: anekadeśaḥ paramāṇavaḥ; tair ārabhyate jalādi śarīraṁ na śukraśoṇitābhyām. tac ca.

106 Gonda, 1966: 68.

107 MW dict. : 760. See also Candrānanda's usage in VSc 10.21: tanu-bhuvanādikāryatayā vijñāto bhagavān īśvaraḥ tatpraṇayanāc cāmnāyasya siddhaṁ prāmāṇyaṁ.

108 Dissolution as described in PD 57-59, See trans. Jhā, 1916: 108.

109 VS 4.2.5. dharmaviśeṣāt / VSc: dharmaviśeṣāpekṣāḥ paramāṇava eva śarīram ārabhante, na śukrādi; kathaṁ hi puṇyavatāṁ śukrādimayaṁ śarīraṁ syāt? ita śca.

110 VS 3.2.17: śāstra sāmarthyāc c'eti / VSc: 'grāmakāmo yajeta svargakāmo yajeta' ity ato'pi śāstrasāmarthyād nānā ātmānaḥ / tasya guṇāḥ buddhi sukha duḥkha icchā dveṣa prayatna ādṛṣṭa saṁskārā vaiśeṣikāḥ / anye tu saṃkhyā parimāṇa pṛthaktva saṁyoga vibhāgāḥ.

111 VS 6.2.18: tataḥ saṁyogo vibhāgaś ca / VSc: saṁcitau yadā dharmādharmau bhavataḥ tadā śarīrendriyaiḥ saṁyogo janmākhyo bhavati kṣīnayoś ca tayor maraṇakāle viyogaḥ / punarapyābhyāṁ

AD) indicates it directly by pointing to the 'bonds of body' (śarīrādibandha) which are preceded by dharma, adharma and a 'specific passion' (rāgaviśeṣa)(VSv 6.2.16). Like Praśastapāda, he discusses also the creation of Brahmins in the beginning of the world, but adds and underlines their 'defining knowledge' (brāhmanatvādijñāna) obtained from God's favour.[112] Vaiśeṣika commentators agree on śarīra-classification as determined (anurūpa) by the 'karmic law' of the selves, the ethical qualities of their 'acts' (kriyā)[113] which imply either impure knowledge, or sinful acts; all these leave 'mental traces' (āśaya) that cause bondage, and subsequently a state of limbo for the wandering 'ghosts' (preta) and 'animals' (tiryagyoni) which are lost, un-liberated, into the void.[114] The liberation form these rigid yet impermanent states is curiously explained by Praśastapāda as happening on an ascending scale; one curious prerequisite he

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dharmādharmābhyāṁ śarīrādisaṁyogo vibhāgaś c'ety evam anādir ayaṁ ghaṭīyantravad āvartate jantuḥ / etad viparītakrameṇo'ucyate, tathā hi.

112 Trans. Isaacson, PhD, 1995, p. 83.

113 Acts (kriyā) emerge also in Candrānanda: VS 4.2.6. kāryaviśeṣāt / VSc: śalabhādi śarīrākhyāt kāryaviśeṣāt manyāmahe: santy ayonijāni. itaś ca.

114 PD 318: aviduṣo rāgadveṣavataḥ pravartakād dharmāt prakṛṣṭāt svalpādharmasahitāt brahmendraprajāpatipitṛmanuṣyalokeṣv āśayānurūpair iṣṭaśarīrendriyaviṣayasukhādibhir yogo bhavati / tathā prakṛṣṭād adharmāt svalpadharmasahitāt pretatiryagyonisthāneṣv aniṣṭaśarīrendriyaviṣayaduhkhābhir yogo bhavati / evam pravṛttilakṣaṇād dharmād adharmasahitād devamanuṣyatiryaṅnārakeṣu punaḥ punaḥ saṃsārabandho bhavati. evam pravṛttilakṣaṇād dharmād adharmasahitād devamanuṣyatiryaṅnārakeṣu punaḥ punaḥ saṃsārabandho bhavati. Trans. Jhā p. 1916, p. 599.

propounds for one' s liberation is that the postulant should be born first into 'a pure family' (viśuddhe kule jātasya) (PD 319).[115] Presumably, allusion is made here to Brahmins, the only class that has access to a soteriological knowledge and mokṣa.[116] This however requires the ascension of many layers and rites of passages, but as Candrānanda,- to which we owe a synthetic approach - shows, that knowledge can be imparted regardless of a specific birth, but only by meeting several renunciations, complemented by the knowledge of padārthas as taught by Vaiśeṣika darśana (VSc 1.1.1). The concluding of eschatological dynamics happens only in the 'final state' of

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[115] PD 319: jñānapūrvakāt tu kṛtād asaṃkalpitaphalād viśuddhe kule jātasya duhkhavigamopāyajijñāsor ācāryam upasaṅgamyotpannaṣaṭpadārthatattvajñānasyājñānanivṛttau viraktasya rāgadveṣādyabhāvāt tajjayor dharmādharmayor anutpattau pūrvasañcitayoś copabhogān nirodhe santoṣasukham śarīraparicchedam cotpadya rāgādinivṛttau nivṛttilakṣaṇaḥ kevalo dharmaḥ paramārthadarśanajam sukham kṛtvā nivartate / tadā nirodhāt nirbījasyāt manaḥ śarīrādinivṛttiḥ / punaḥ śarīrādyanutpattau dagdhendhanānalavadupaśamo mokṣa iti. Trans. Jhā, 1916, p. 601. Compare also with VSc 6.2.18 (where sañcita of dharma and adharma explain the law of karma).

[116] According to Candrānanda, Brahmins can be morally speaking of several types: 'inferior', (hīna), 'mediocre' (sama), 'qualified' (viśiṣṭa) and 'virtuous' (dhārmika) (VSc 6.1.13-14). Praśastapāda, though he sees Brahmins as the possessors of knowledge, he does accept that transition between classes and cosmic layers, through rebirths, is not insurmountable; Vaiśeṣika does not seem to deny the transition between these layers, which means that however hierarchical and uneven the cosmos might be, it is not impossible transiting vertically on this scale, as long as basic dharmic acts are fully accomplished. Quite paradoxically the boundaries are not fixed; on the contrary they are flexible.

ātman, which transcends repeated cosmogony-eschatology interplay and reaches niḥśreyasa. As Halbfass puts it, this 'final stage' ('soteriontology') represents the reversal of cosmogony; this state is a purely substantial one where ātman transcends any cosmogonic action which disperses the simple nature of substance into separate, composite, diverse and complex particularities.[117] Obeyesekere, who looked into the eschatology of Indian religions and beyond, points to four themes that define eschatology,[118] three of which earlier discussed (saṃsāra, rebirth, and karma theory). In the following I shall deal with the fourth one, described by Vaiśeṣika as the ultimate state of ātman's liberation (niḥśreyasa).

Niḥśreyasa

In Vaiśeṣika system it looks as if the place of ātman in the list of nine fundamental dravyas is not significant; the general view one has is that we deal with a rather strict physicalism, whose doctrine of liberation, as a simple, pre-cosmogonic, pre-compositional soteriological state, is worthy of ridicule.[119] Yet Candrānanda sets ātman apart from the group of 'vulnerable' substances that subsists in an atomic state (e.g.

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117 Halbfass, 1992, p. 233; in this point the author seems to put an agreement between Advaita Vedānta, Mahāyāna Buddhist and Vaiśeṣikas.
118 Obeyesekere, 1980: 139.
119 NK ed. 1991: 636 l. 12-13: atha matam: acetanasyātmano muktasyāpi pāṣāṇād aviśeṣaḥ, so'pi hi na sukhāyate na ca duḥkhāyate, mukto 'pi yadi tathaiva, ko 'nayor viśeṣaḥ?; see Bronkhorst 2014:570.

the four mahābhūtas and manas) and locates it instead next to those which have a fantastically large dimension (e.g. ākāśa VS 7.1.28-29); also significantly within the theory of karma, ātman is alongside diś, kāla, and ākāśa, 'devoid of action' (niṣkriya) (VSc 5.2. 23). Since ātman cannot be determined by time, Vaiśeṣika's eschatology stretches only within what I have called the 'karmic standard model' (saṃsāra, jantu, karman).[120] When it comes to the fourth eschatological model (niḥśreyasa) however, Vaiśeṣika's dynamics ceases to operate because 'action' (karman), 'change', 'transformation', and 'composition', no longer have any scope, nor room in the static niḥśreyasa. To put it in another way, Vaiśeṣika's doctrine of liberation is not eschatology at all, because it renders ātman's cognitive capabilities unworkable. Though ātman is the receptacle of the act of perception (catuṣṭayasannikarṣa),[121] the agents of the cognitive act (manas, artha, indriya) remain external to it. In addition, manas, because of its atomic, mobility and capacity of memory storage (smṛti), appears to transport together with it

[120] I refer here to saṃsāra, rebirth theory (jantu) and the theory of karma, all of which plausible equivalent concepts to ἔσχατος.

[121] VS 3.1.13: ātm'endriya mano'rtha sannikarṣād yan niṣpadyate tad anyat / VSc: catuṣṭayasannikarṣād yadutpadyate jñānākhyaṁ karyam tad anyad dhetvantaram ātma jñāpakam asti iti / jñānasya samavāyi kāraṇāpekṣitvaṁ kāryatvāt ghaṭavat […].

the set of vaiśeṣikaguṇas into different bodies.[122] Cognition is the key concept that lies at the interface between the state of an all pervasive motionless ātman (VSc 5.2.23; VSc 7.1.28-29) and a subtle, simple, and material 'individualised state' (vyavasthā) of self (VSc 3.2.16).[123] Bondage is due to the attachment of manas with the external world of senses and objects, which presumably burdens ātman and drags it into a differentiated state (stamped by a unique series vaiśeṣikaguṇas that vary from an ātman to another). The question to which an answer is not yet found is as to whether, in its ultimate state, ātman is both 'all-pervasive' (vibhu) and 'diverse' (nānā). Both Sūtrapāṭha and Vṛtti, if analysed separately, - as sometimes these should[124] - seem to conflict each other. Some clues may come from a separate analysis of the viśeṣa-padārtha, or pṛthaktva-guṇa.[125] There are reasons to assume

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[122] In this set of qualities, we must recognise what PD 359 calls to be 'ativāhikaśarīra' which for Praśastapāda is the epithet for the 'subtle body'.

[123] Candrānanda interprets VSc 3.1.16 to designate the plurality of souls: VS 3.2.16 nānā vyavasthātaḥ / VSc: anyasya sukhādiyoge'nyasya tadabhāvād anayā vyavasthayā nānā ātmānaḥ.

[124] I argue that owing to the distance in time these were composed, both Sūtrapāṭha and Vṛtti should also be read and reflected separately; this exercise may bore some insightful results. It is necessarily to dwell and reflect on these contradictions most particularly; textual critical explanations may not be the whole key to solve the many exegetical conundrums; common sense should be used.

[125] See appendix on viśeṣa in Halbfass, 1992: I shall deal with these problems in a forthcoming comparative study on the 'ultimate differentia' at Bhaṭṭa Vādīndra and Duns Scotus.

that Vaiśeṣika draws from the cosmogony of Chāndogya Upaniṣad, particularly the dialogue between the Uddālaka Āruṇi and Śvetaketu, according to which substances exist in the beginning in an undifferentiated and non-phenomenal state (asat).[126] Their differentiation (plurality), might have evolved only after a process of linear 'emanation' from the primeval substances (the latter from the former) or from the 'comingling' of these in various combinations.[127] In other words, plurality exist 'in nuce' from the beginning (through viśeṣa and antyaviśeṣa) while emanation and comingling do not necessarily mean production and multiplication. If this is the original state that ātman has, it follows that liberation must be the relocation of soul into its pre-cosmological state. It seems that such 'soteriontology' (as Halbfass calls it) follows an anti-phenomenological orientation, much similar to the eschatological 'dissolution' (saṃhāra) discussed earlier in which Maheśvara, likewise a yogi, withdraws the differentiated creation, into a state that is ultimately static, simple, and devoid of change.[128] This is the process re-enacted by the Vaiśeṣika student too, of whom it is required several ethical and intellectual virtues such as vairāgya. Though yoga is not directly a means to liberation, in Candrānanda, we have

[126] Acharya, 2016: 861.
[127] Acharya, 2016: 862.
[128] This change is in fact a 'karmic change' with ethical (dharmic) implications; it relates to the theory of karma, both at a physical and ethical level.

mokṣa and yoga several times mentioned together.[129] This is not a random mention; in Patañjali's Yogasūtra (YS) there are indeed techniques (limbs) which at the individual's intellectual and psychological levels can produce an eschatological 'withdrawal' (saṃhāra). In VSc, the purpose sought is 'detachment' (vairāgya) on the one hand, and 'liberation' (niḥśreyasa) on the other.[130] In VSc almost all eight limbs of Patañjali are mentioned,[131] which can roughly be placed into two major groups: abhyāsa and vairāgya;[132] some of them involve action (yogādyanuṣṭhāna), but since action is not part of the final eschatological state (niḥśreyasa), the commentator takes into account only those that can instaure non-action and detachment. Thus, in VSc 5.2.17 Candrānanda refers to a breathing technique (vāyunigraha) on which depends the withdrawal of the senses from their respective objects (in this we must recognise pratyāhāra).[133] This passage clearly

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[129] Yogamokṣau: twice mentioned, first in VSc 5.2.15 (fourth line), and second in VSc 5.2.22 (third line).

[130] Yoga has an ambivalent role: abhyāsa and vairagya. It is only in the vairāgyic aspect that the static eschatology concludes particularly in dhāraṇā (fixation); if the yoga abhyāsa increases the temporality, vairagya, however, would dissolve it.

[131] The eight limbs of Patañjali's YS are classified in two groups: some control the body (yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra), other master the mind (dhāraṇā, dhyāna, and samādhi).

[132] Feuerstein, 1980, p. 72, 78.

[133] VS 5.2.17: ātmasthe manasi śarīrasya sukhaduḥkhābhāvaḥ sa yogaḥ / VSc: yadā hy ātmani mano'vasthitaṁ n'endriyeṣu tadā catuṣṭayasannikarṣasyānārambhāt tat kāryayoḥ sukhaduḥkhayor

elucidates that mind should ‘concentrate’ (samādhi) tightly to the soul ‘only’; besides, in another similar yogic passage (VSc 9.13) the particle ‘eva’ stresses further the importance of this exclusive co-location between mind and soul, away from the senses.[134] Since mind is atomic and mobile, while soul is ultimately all-pervasive and unmoving, this ‘yogic concentration’ is meant to annihilate any motion which may affect the nature of the soul. Niḥśreyasa, presents us thus with a metastatic form of ontology, whereby ātman and other dravyas undergo a ‘sublation process’, and by which these would eventually find their pre-cosmogonic state of origination, characterised by non-diversity of their own essence and simplicity.

Conclusions

This paper gave an account of several slippery terms/concepts related to the eschatology of the Vaiśeṣika system; it seems that both cosmos and ātman undergo a process of subtraction, or to put it philosophically, a ‘phenomenological sublation’ (phänomenologische

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abhāvarūpo vidyamānaśarīrasya ātmano vāyunigrahāpekṣa ātmano manasā saṁyogo yogaḥ / yogāṅgaṁ prāṇāyāma karma kiṁ n’oktam.

[134] Preceding line of VS 9.13: pratyakṣaparokṣaviṣayatvād yogipratyakṣaṁ pratyakṣānumānayor madhye vyākhyāyate / VS 9.13: ātmanyātmamanasoḥ saṁyogaviśeṣād ātmapratyakṣam / VSc: āhṛtya viṣayebhya indriyāṇi tebhyaś ca mana ātmany eva yadā samādhīyate tadā yogajadharmāpekṣādātmāntaḥ karaṇasaṁyogād viśiṣṭāt tatra bhavatāṁ svasmin na ātmani jñānaṁ pratyakṣam utpadyate.

Aufhebung);[135] that is to say, the dynamics of eschatology do not evolve into a further 'cosmic expansion' (as the current HEP explain),[136] but point rather to a reverse journey, that leads the substance to an original static, simple status quo, where both ātman and other dravyas lose their phenomenological diversification, while maintaining in potentiality their own diversity. The method would be exclusively ontological, not a phenomenological disclosing as in Heidegger's Erschlossenheit (disclosedness); nor it would be the being 'bracketed' (epoché) à la Husserl; quite the contrary, being is assumed and demonstrated. What Vaiśeṣika's ontology puts forward is a radical elimination of an infinitude of external characteristics of the substance, precisely because 'diversity' (nānā) and 'plurality' (vyavasthā)

[135] 'A phenomenological sublation' by which antyaviśeṣa (a smaller entity) assimilates itself, without absorption, into a larger one (viśeṣa); that is to say, the antyaviśeṣa subsists eternally into ātman's sāmānyaviśeṣa. One question remains whether we should take antyaviśeṣa to designate the plurality of ātman.

[136] Allusion is made here to explanations pertaining to 'the development of the universe' (Hubble's law), 'supernova explosions' and 'Big Bang expansion theory' as explained by HEP (High Energy Physics); ('…the cosmological aspects of particle physics show that search towards higher energies in accelerator experiments is also in a sense a look backward in time to the early moments of creation, and indeed the symbiosis of particle physics and cosmology has become an important theme of the last decade'); see Perkins 2000: 28-30; 304.

are ontological immanent qualities of the substance itself.[137] The ontological pluralism of Indian systems like Vaiśeṣika draws perhaps closer to the Greek concept of 'epistemological unfolding' (ἀποκάλυψις), in which things come to be perceived and named for what their own essence really stands for.

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VS=Sūtrapāṭha of Candrānanda's Vṛtti (as contained primarily by Candrānanda's Vṛtti; it also incorporates a series of new Sūtrapāṭha MSS, collected and read by myself).

VSc=Vaiśeṣikasūtras with Candrānanda's Vṛtti. GOS, 136. Baroda; Oriental Institute. 1961. (Both editions can be accessed at: Weston Library (Ind. Sansk. Ser. D. 1/136), and Oriental Institute, Oxford (508 Gae/136).

VSv=Vaiśeṣikadarśana of Kaṇāda with an anonymous commentary. A. Thakur ed. Darbhanga: Mithilā Institute. 1957.

VSi=Il Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra Di Kaṇāda. Introduzione, testo, traduzione, commento, lessico per Leonardo V. Arena. Urbino: Universita Degli Studi di Urbino. 1982.

PD=Praśastapāda's Padārthadharmasaṃgraha. Word Index to the Praśastapādabhāṣya: a complete word index to the printed editions of the Praśastapādabhāṣya. Bronkhorst, J. & Ramseier, Y. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. 1994. (All my references are from this edition).

[137] See for example the relationship between pṛthaktva and viśeṣa discussed by Halbfass 1992: 270; and Narain 1976: 215.

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Yuktidīpikā

DP=Vaiśeṣika Philosophy according to the Daśapadārthaśāstrī of Candra, Thomas, F.W. ed. Trans. H. Ui. London: Royal Asiatic Society. 1917. (Sanskrit reconstruction from a Chinese translation); see also Keechi Miyamoto. The Metaphysics and Epistemology of the Early Vaiśeṣikas. Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. 1996. (Contains an English trans. of DP; All my quotations are from this edition).

NK=Nyāyakandalī of Śrīdhara, with three sub-commentaries, ed. J.S. Jetly and Vasant G. Parikh, Vadodara: Oriental Institute, 1991.

Vyo=Vyomavati of Vyomaśivācārya. Varanasi: Sampurnanad Sankrit Vishvav Idyalaya Press. Sastri, Gaurinath ed. 1983.

NTG=Novum Testamentum Graecae. Nestle-Aland 28th ed. (online).

Isaacson PhD=Isaacson, Harunaga. Materials for the Study of the Vaiśeṣika system. (Doctorate Thesis submitted at Rijksuniversiteit te Lieden. 1995.

SK=Sāṃkhyakārikā. Les stropes de Samkhya avec le commentaire de Gauḍapāda. Trans. Anne-Marie Esnoul. Paris: Les Belles Lettres. 1964.

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Apte Dict.=Apte, Vaman Shivaram. The practical Sanskrit-English dictionary. Revised and enlarged edition. 3v. Poona: Prasad Prakashan. 1957-1959. (online).

LSJ. =A Greek-English Lexicon. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, Eds. Revised by H. S. Jones print. 1968; & (online).

LXX =The Septuagint. Rahlfs/Hanhart. Eds. (online).

MW = Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary (online).

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Discourse on So-called Śiva Vāman Image: A Comprehensive study of the Mansar's Brick structure (Hidimba Hill/MNS 3) and Images.

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Abstract: The so-called Śiva Vāman image from Mansar is presently placed in the National Museum, New Delhi. There are several controversies on its religious identification. Earlier scholars were of the opinion that it is a Buddhist deity but later, many scholars have identified the image as a śaivite Brāhmanical deity. This religious controversy still continues about Mansar site i.e. Hidimba hill/MNS 3 where the so-called Śiva Vāman was discovered. The present paper is an attempt to trace the religious identity of the controversial figures from the Mansar by investigating the religious identity of the brick structure and the images obtained from Hidimba hill/MNS 3 from Mansar.

Keywords: Mansar, Śiva Vāman, Vākāṭaka, Hidimba Hill, Ramtek, Jāmbhāl, MNS 3, Nagpur, Bhairava, Vidarbha.

Introduction

The Mansar site comes under the Mansar village, Ramtek tehsil of Nagpur District in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state. Mansar site is just 1 km away from the Mansar village. The Vākāṭaka's vaiṣnavite religious places in Rāmgiri/Ramtek are approximately 5 km away from Mansar site and, the capital of Vākāṭakas *Nandivardhana* (presently Nagardhan village) is also at a distance less than 7 km from Mansar. Mansar site is dense with archaeological materials and its peripheral region is famous for the bauxite mining.

In 1972, the mining contractor Shri. Bishan found a dwarfish image on the mound of Mansar i.e. Hidīmba hill/MNS 3 (Bakker, 1997, 86). It is called as Śiva Vāman.[1] The image is one of the most controversial image in the Indian art because of it's religious identification. The Hidimba hill/MNS 3 site had been excavated after more than two decades from the year of the so-called Śiva Vāman image was found. Archaeologists J. P. Joshi and A. K. Sharma found unusual brick structures over the hill during the excavation. This structure also came under the religious contention after finding the archaeological materials in the site.

It is important to study the relationship between the controversial dwarfish images and the brick structure to trace the religious identity of the site.

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[1] The nomenclature of the image is based on the label indicates under the sculpture's pedestal, when it was placed in the National Museum, New Delhi.

The iconographic description of the Mansar Image and Predecessors' views on the Mansar Image (Fig. 1):

The discovered Mansar image is 84 cm high and carved in the red sandstone. The sculpture is in the form of a sculptured stele and nearly looks like a rounded sculpture. It is seated at a slight angle on a cushion with a backrest and its left knee risen. It possesses four hands, is potbellied and is chubby. Each of the four hands is positioned differently. The right fore hand's palm holds the flowers with the arm bent and the elbow resting on the backrest. The right rear hand is raised upward clasping the rosary *(mālā)* between the thumb and index finger. The left fore hand rests on the knee and, left rear raised hand is holding the stem of a flower (possibly *padma,* but due to damage only stem portion remains). The image has a rounded face with eyebrows that are raised at the outer edges, somewhat slanted double eyelids, a broad nose and, thick pursed lips which appears like a mysterious smile. The right earlobe is adorned with jewelled ear ornament and left earlobe with large circular earring. Image's body is adorned with a beautiful necklace which is composed in a string of beads and jewels. Similarly, each arms of the image are beautified with ornamented bangles and rear hands are adorned with the jewels as seen in the central portion of the necklace with foliage motif. The anklet on the feet has similarity with wrist's bangle design; and the left ankle is especially decorated in the shape of a snake *(nāganūpura).* Six strings of pearls that are

twisted with certain irregularity (*muktayajñopavita)* is dangling from the left shoulder to the right foot and arm. The image's potbelly is tied with a cloth *(udarbandh)* and a loincloth *(dhoti)* extending down between the feet. The important characteristic of the image are hair and hair-dresses. A section of the hair is tied on top of the head with jewelled hair band in front, another section of the hair *(jatās) are* massed under the coils *(nāgavalaya).* The tufted coils rest at the crown of the head with the hair falling to the right. A crescent moon *(ćandrakalā)* accompanies with skull ornaments on the left side of the head. Subsequently, a cluster of small flowers are present on the centre portion of the head.

S.B. Deo is the first scholar who identified Mansar image as a Buddhist image, similar to 'Jāmbhāl' by observing the features of potbelly, citron in its right palm and so-called mongoose like animal wrapped around his leg (Deo, 1972). Similar denotation has been made by Raghubir Singh (IAR, 1975, 59). After some time, S.B. Deo changed his opinion on the iconographic identification and he stated that the image is falling under śaivaite category. He says the presence of skull as an ornament and appearance of the short stumpy form is possibly an image of '*Batuk-Bhairava*'; but he also noted that the absence of dog and presence of jewels are however going against the *Bhairava* identity (Deo, 1976, 275-277). He considers this image as part of Vākāṭaka tradition by it's style and, he compares this image with Yakṣa-dwārapālas from cave

no. 19 in Ajanta on the certain characteristics such as headdresses, ornaments and facial features (1976, 275-277).

After S.B. Deo, C. Sivaramamurthy also claimed that the Mansar image belonged to śaivite category. While placing this image in the National Museum, New Delhi, he denoted it as *Śiva Vāman*. He describes the sculpture's epithets of *hrasvāya* and *vāmanāya* form (dwarf form) from Śatarudrīya text (Sivaramamurthy, 1976, 21). Further, he attributed name *Śiva Vāman* on the basis of the iconographic markers presents on the image: the crescent moon *(ćandrakalā)*, skull *(kapāla)*, the eight favoured flower *(asṭapushpikā)*, the hand clasping a rosary *(akṣamāla)*, the ear ornament on the left ear proclaiming his eternal *ardhanārīśvara* hermaphrodite form *(tāṭaṅka)* and the serpent anklet *(nāganūpura)*.[2]

Johanna William completely agrees with Sivaramamurthi on his śaivite iconographic identification. Similarly, she compares this image with the sixth century *Kubera* image from the Udaipur for the iconographic analysis (Williams, 1983, 215-233). Sara Schastock adverts that Mansar image falls under the class of *Kubera* or *Yakṣa* category by observing the style of headdresses, ornamentation and physical appearance (Schastok, 1983, 105-108). She claimed that either this image falls under the Gupta-Vākāṭaka style or Chālukya-Rāshṭrakuta style (1983, 105-108). She tries to compare

[2] See the description of the image at list of illustration in *Satarudriya*: *Vibhuti of Siva's Iconography* by C. Sivaramamurthy.

Mansar image with Dakṣināmurthī and Ardhnāri sculptures from the early Chālukyan temples located on the Krishna-Tungabhadra sangam region (1983, 105-108). Scholars like N.P. Joshi, A.P. Jamkhedkar and I.K. Sharma also agrees that Mansar image belongs to śaivite category. N.P. Joshi placed this image in the category of Śiva with four hand and dated it to the Gupta period (Joshi, 1984, 52), Jamkhedkar agrees with Deo's identification of the image (Jamkhedkar, 1991, 203) and, I.K. Sharma agrees with C. Sivaramamurti's analysis on this sculpture as *Batuk Bhairava* and *Śiva Vāman* (Sharma, 1992, 219-224) respectively.

Likewise, Hans Bakker also agreed to denote Mansar image as śaivite deity as above mentioned scholars but he tries to connect the relationship of the image with the archaeological space where this image found. He claimed that it was a worshiping śaivite image of *Maheśvara* referred *Pravareśvara* (god of Pravarséna II) which was installed in the temple *Pravareśvaradevakulasthāna* erected by the Pravarséna II (Bakker, 1997, 149).

Robert Brown is another scholar who says that the so-called Śiva Vāman is a Nidhī figure without mentioning the image's religious identity (Brown, 2004, 59). His argument is based on finding similar iconographic peculiarities in Ellora caves of western Deccan, Aihole and Ajanta (2004, 59-60). He suggested that the Mansar image is a representation of the

image of Nidhi figure by observing the potbellied corpulence which is one of the characteristics of richness (2004, 59-60).

Peter Bisschop refers three passage from the literature of Kālidāsa's *Kumārsambhava* to identify this image as Śiva (Bisschop, 2008, 4-5). Kaoru Nakata is another important scholar, who not only makes the review of literature on this particular image but he systematically dislodges the opinion of the above mentioned scholars. He rejects the idea of the Mansar image as *Jāmbhāl* or *Kubera* by observing the fact that the animal wrapped around its leg doesn't have similarity with mongoose and, the moneybag which symbolises the wealth is absent in the present image (Nakata, 2008, 4). Similarly, he dislodges the idea of Mansar image as Śiva Vāman by saying that dwarfness of the image and appearance of śaivite iconographical marker does not prove that the present image belongs to that of Śiva Vāman (2008, 4). Further, he says that the ornamentation observed over the sculpture's body can be found in Buddhist as well as in śaivaite images. He gives the examples of the *Manibhadra Yakṣa* from Ajanta and *śaiva* image of *Vriśivāhana* in the Tanjore Art Gallery collection (2008, 6).

Nakata finds laxity in Hans Bakker's statement when he says that Mansar image was the main worshipped idol. Nakata says the image was discovered by the chance in a heap of the debris and none of the details are available regarding its installation in the place (2008, 6). Further, he mentions the image is sculptured stele which indicates that it was attached

to the brick structure and by considering the fact that the body of image rests on slant, its very unlikely that the image stood independently as an object of worship (2008, 6). He is of the opinion that this sculpture was a part of architecture and, the image's slanted position suggests the possibility that this image had a similar pair (2008, 6). To prove his statement that Mansar image was not a main deity of the shrine, he compares it with Sadāśiva image from Mandhal (Mandhal village is 75 km far away from Nagpur) which belonged to Vākāṭakas period but having a different style (2008, 6).

From the characteristics of the stumpiness nature and corpulence in round form, he opined that Mandhal Sadāśiva was a worshipped image or main idol from its volume, rather than the Mansar image which appears in high relief and seems to be the part of an architectural structure (2008, 6). He rejects Brown's statement by saying that the representation of the śaivite features like skull and snake on the image makes Mansar image as Nidhī is against the presupposition (2008, 7). In conclusion, Nakata interprets that Mansar image played the mediator or substitutional character between Gana and the main deity (2008, 8). He cited two examples: two figures of the Śankhapani and Padmapanī on the either side of the chaitya arch of Ajanta cave no. 19 of Ajanta is the worshiping mediator character between Buddha (the main icon inside the cave) and Gana images which are presented near to Śankhapani and Padmapanī on the facade (2008, 8).

Similarly, he compares Bhagirath image as mediator character between Gangadhar Śiva and Gana in *ahōmudra* (adorable posture) (2008, 8). Therefore, while comparing these panels he relate this image as the mediator between main image (which is totally absent in the Mansar architectural structure) and Gana images discovered in the Mansar excavation. Finally, he decided the iconography of this image as Śivagana by locating the characteristics such as dwarf figure and śaivite elements like skull and snake (2008, 9).

The Study of Brick Structure where Mansar Image was discovered:

The facts noticeable from the above mentioned scholar's view is that only Hans Bakker and Nakata are trying to relate the brick structure with the Mansar image. But the limitation of Bakker's statement is he concluded that the Mansar Brick structure belonged to śaivism before the archaeological excavation of the site. On the other hand, Nakata could not relate the religious identity of the archeological site with the image properly. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the religious identity of the structural architecture for ascertaining the so-called Śiva Vāman's religious identity.

The hillock where the Mansar image was found is named as Hidimba hill/ MNS 3 site. The site has been excavated under the supervision of J.P. Joshi and A.K. Sharma on the request of Arya Nagarjun Surai Sasai who is the president of

Bodhisttava Nagarjuna Smaraka Sanstha va Anusandhan Kendra, Nagpur. This excavation was done in the three phases from 1998 to 2000. In the first phase Julfiquakar Ali, Archana Dubey Asthana, P.M. Khobragade and J.S. Dubey participated from January to March 1998 (IAR, 2003, 95).

In the next phase of the excavation P.M. Khobragade, Julfiquar Ali, Dhirendra Sharma and J.S. Dubey took part from 26 December 1998 to March 1999 (IAR, 2004, 114) and, Reema Sobati, Dhirendra Sharma, J.S. Dubey and Balbir Singh were joined in the last phase of the excavation during winter 2000 (IAR, 2005, 103). But the importance of the site was already known even before the discovery of Mansar image and, excavation of the site was initially done during the colonial era and, T.A. Wellsted has written about about the Hidimba Hill/ MNS 3 site in 1933-34 (Wellsted, 1934, 158-166). Wellsted says that Hill B (Hidimba Hill) was apparently overbuilt with temples and all surface finds of sculptures have come from there. "The stone used is a fined-grained aluminium sand stones, easy to work and permitting a fine finish (1934, 161-162)."

The excavation reports have been published in *Indian Archeology - A review* from 1998 to 2000 and the compilation of these reports were published in the *Purātattva, Bulletin of Indian Archaeological Society*, Number 30 in 1999-2000. Hans Bakker has mentioned about this site in his article 'Mansar' in 2004. Later, J.P. Joshi and A.K. Sharma

republished the archeological report 'Purāmanthana' by adding the editorial board members like B.R. Mani and G.S. Kwaja in 2005. There are some mistakes to be found in the archeological reports. One of them is T.A. Wellsted's report which is published in the *Journal and proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, Vol. XXIX (1933) instead of which it is mentioned in the excavation report that 'the journal of Bombay Asiatic society in 1935' (Bakker, 2004, 75). Hans Bakker has pointed out this mistake and his whole article is based on the lacks he found in the reports and his own arguments.

The Buddhist Stupa Structures

From the Purātattva report, it has been cleared that as per sequential stratigraphic order of the excavated site, the first section of the layer belonged to Sātavāhana period (200 B.C.E. to 250 C.E.). While digging in the eastern peripheral area, archeologists found the evidences of the early settlers in the MNS 3 site. It might have been decided to build three stupas by exploiting the natural contour of the hill in the early historical period. The fourth stupa was built in the third phase which is considered as belonging to the post-Vākāṭaka period (500-700 C.E.). The description of the site mentioned in the excavation report is as follows:

The early stupa (stupa 1) also found in the central area was having extant four to five courses of bricks measuring 48 cm x 25 cm x 8 cm in size. The earliest stupa (stupa 1) was having a diameter of 8 m not much could be said about its superstructure as its three sides were super imposed with massive later structure which could not remove. The stupa later enlarged by using the bricks of the size 42 cm x 22 cm x 7 cm (stupa 2). It was increased by making brick boxes filled with earth and small boulders of technique of building stupa also found at Pauni. The present available height thus achieved was 2 m in the peripheral area and 3.6 m the central area and approximate diameter of stupa is 14 m. It has the brick *pradakshinapath* around it and rectangular projection is also available in the eastern side. The stupa has given support on the eastern side with stone rubble revetment having 8 to 9 courses of the boulders. A fragment of a soap-stone relic-casket along with a lid fragment has also been recovered from the peripheral area of this stupa. On the north-eastern side there is another brick-structure which has been badly damaged (Fig. 2).

The another stupa (stupa 3) roughly roundish in shape of undressed boulders having a diameter of 11 m with a extant height of 2.70 m has 7-8 courses of undressed stones. It has the *pradakshinapath* of 1 m wide, which has been built right over the northern wall of the last box of the stupa 2. This stupa came into disuse along with stupa 2. On the north-eastern side of the central area an oval chaitya built in two phases having a pedestal on the northern side and the entrance on the western

side was exposed. It is 8 m long north-south and 5.50 m wide east-west.

To the north of the Purshamedha, at a higher level, abutting the northern wall of the boxes of the earlier Stupa, a stone Stupa built of semi-dressed stones was exposed. It has a diameter of 13.0 m and is enclosed by a 1.10 m wide pradakshinapath of bricks measuring 42 cm x 22 cm x 7 cm in size. The inner side of the Stupa has been strengthened by providing two stone walls, running in east-west direction. On the eastern side stupa elevation is available to a height of 2.0 m having six courses of semidressed stones.

[…] Buddhist finally built a stupa having 24 brick built boxes with central box filled with rubble and stone. This large stupa was built at the top and remained in the existence till the end of the 7th century. This stupa associated with an oval chaitya on the southern-eastern side which was built over an earlier chaitya. While exposing the boulder foundation of the upper most stupa, on the southern-eastern corner, at the depth of the 1.0 m below surface, a fragment of an earthen relic casket is made micaceous clay with an additional coating of mica on the outer surface (Fig. 3)[3].

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[3] All quotes are from Joshi and Sharma, 1999-2000, pp. 128-131.

But Hans Bakker had serious doubts on the excavation report. He said that archaeologists claimed the first layer of the excavation to be a buddhist site without finding any buddhist image or artefact (Bakker, 2004, 78). He considers the relic casket discovered along with lid fragment recovered from the peripheral area of the stupa (i.e. stupa 2) might be ordinary stone casket which could be used for any kind of the purposes (2004, 78).

The republished excavation report 'Purāmanthana' says that the existence of three stupas and a chaityas which was observed in the first phase of the excavation is belonged to Maurya to Śunga period and, J.P. Joshi and A.K. Sharma draws these three stupas' and chaityas' contemporaneousness with Aśokan Deōṭek inscription from the Chandrapur district (Joshi, Sharma, Kwaja, 2005, 7-8). Similarly, they stated that *kunds* of Vājapeya Yajña, small figures of Lajjā-Gauri, Kuber and Nandi recovered from the south-eastern area of the Hidimba hill/MNS 3 site are belonged to Sātavāhana period (2005, 10). However, Hans Bakker's doubt adverts obscure statement but it requires to be read with considerable seriousness and as in the reports there is laxity of visual evidences, so, it needs to be reverified by cross checking with various textual, archaeological and numismatic evidences.

According to the Ceylonese literary source Mahāvaṃśa mentions that the third Buddhist council was held during the reign of Aśōka in his capital Pātalīputra (Patna). Hereafter, the

council dispatched missionaries for propagating Buddhism to various parts of the country. But there are no direct written evidences as such, to prove that Aśōka sent missionaries to the Vidarbha region. With respect to the archaeological evidences J.P. Joshi and A.K. Sharma had already given the evidence of the Deōṭek inscription which belonged to Aśōkan period but the recent discovery of Aśōkan inscription from Bhivakund strengthened the statement that Buddhism had entered Vidarbha after the third Buddhist council (Sawant, 2012, 61).

However, the Buddhist text 'Suttanipāta', a part of the Khuddaka Nikāya of Tripiṭaka, describes that sage Bavari who was a resident on the bank of the Godavari sent his pupil to meet Buddha (Alone, 2016, 4). Further, in the text it has been mentioned that the places of Aśmaka and Mulaka which were part of southern part of Narmada i.e. Dakṣiṇāpatha (2016, 4) give the first evidence to the appearance of Buddhism in the historical region close to Vidarbha.

As mentioned in the excavation report, the claim that the Buddhist stupas art activity goes till Śunga period is difficult to accept because none of the excavated archeological sites, inscriptions and coins so far indicates Śungas occupation in the Vidarbha. But many centuries later Kālidāsa's text *Mālavikāgnimitra* relates the event that followed the usurpation of power by the Śungas from the late Mauryan ruler Bṛhdatta after which Puśyamitra Sunga's son Agnimitra gets married to Mādhavséna's daughter. Mādhavséna was the

cousin of Maurya's feudatory king Yajñaséna who was ruler of Vidarbha.[4] It can be presumed that the information in Kalidasa's Mālavikāginitra is likely to be historical in the nature as Kālidāsa himself had migrated from the north India and stayed in Vidisha and perhaps he might have recorded the hearsay account that was in circulation during that time. Nevertheless, it may be observed that the Śungas had no direct support to the Buddhist Sangh and never patronised them. On the other hand Giovanni Verardi has cited the text Aśōkavadana where he describes the misogynic behaviour of

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[4] "The work refers to Yajñasena, the rulers of Vidarbha, who was the brother-in-law of the Mauryan minister and such as, natural enemy (prakṛityāmitra) of the Śungas. It seems that during the reign of Bṛihdatta, there were two factions in the Magadhan Court, one headed by the Mouryans minister and the other by Puśymitra Śuṇga, the commander in chief of the Mouryan army. When the latter staged his coup d'état at Pataliputra, Yajñasena usurped the kingdom of Vidarbha disregarding the rightful claim of his cousin, Kumara Mādhavasena." Malavikagnimitra further states that "once when Kumāra Mādhavasena was secretly on his way to Vidisa along with his younger sister Mālavikā, who had been betrothed to Pushymitra's son Agnimitra, he was captured by an Antapāla (Warden of the Marches) of Yajñasena and kept under custody. Thereupon Agnimitra demanded surrender. The king of Vidarbha is then said to have assured the Vidiśā ruler return the young prince on the condition that his brother-in law, the Mouryan minister, be set liberty. This enraged Agnimitra who ordered his general Vīrasena to march against Vidarbha. Yajñasena was defeated, Mādhavasena released from captivity and kingdom of Vidarbha was divided between the cousins, the river Varada forming the boundary between the kingdoms. This incident must have helped the Śungas in the extension of their political influence to the south of the Narmada" (See Deo S.B. and Joshi J.P., *Pauni Excavation,* Nagpur: Nagpur University Publication, 1969-70).

Puśhyamitra Śunga towards Buddhists. Puśyamitra's aim was to destroy Buddhist religion with the armed forces and he moved forward to attack on the Kukkuṭarāma monastery (it is also known as Aśōkarāma) which was founded by Aśōka and placed in Pātalīputra (Verardi, 2011, 100).

The issue about Sātavāhanas ruling in the Vidarbha region has been cleared after the discovery of a large amount of Sātavāhana coins in the Vidarbha region.[5] As none of the inscriptional evidences found in the Vidarbha region but the Hathigumpha inscription in Orissa mentions Śātakarṇi I, the earlier king of the Sātavāhana faced an invasion of his kingdom in Vidarbha by the Kalinga (Orissa) king Khārvela

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[5] Most common symbols on coins from Vidarbha is elephant on observe and Ujjain symbol on the reverse, found on the coin of rulers like Satavahana or Sādavāhana, Vāsiṣṭīputra Pulamāvī (copper/lead), Vāsiṣṭīputra Sātakarṇi (copper/lead), Siva Sri Pulamāvī (lead), Siva Skanda Satakarni (lead), Gautamīputra Yajña Sri Sātakarṇi (copper/potin/lead), Vijay Sātakarṇi (elephant), Saka Sātakarṇi (?), Karṇa Satakarṇi, Kumbha Sātakarṇi (potin). Lakśmi type coin of Siri Sātakarṇi has been reported from Kaundinaypur. There are some coins bearing legend 'Sātavāhana' or 'Sādavāhana' reported from the Vidarbha region (the excavation of Bhon yielded a few inscribed coins; one of which clear issuer as –'Sādavāhana'). Other type bears bold taurine, Ujjain symbol with pallet inside and a legend 'no Siri Sātavāha' (also of Siri Sati and Satakarṇi) on the observe and; tree with leaves on the reverse (potin/bronze). From Vidarbha, two major hoards of Satavahanacoins are recorded, one from Chanda (Chandrapur district) and other from the Tarhala (Akola district). (See Mirashi, V.V., *The History and Inscriptions of the Sātavāhana and the Western Kśatrapa*, Mumbai: Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture, 1981).

(Alone, 2002, 9). This inscription mentions that the king Khārvela in his second year of reign sent his four-membered army to the west without minding the powerful king Śātakarṇi and it struck terror in the hearts of the people living in the Assikanagara which is presently identified with Adam village near Nagpur.[6] Second inscriptional evidence is from Nasik of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi where he is referred as *Benākaṭakasvāmi* (Mirashi, 1981, 25). Bennā is the modern Wainganga river in the Vidarbha region. This evidences clearly indicates the monarchy of Sātavāhanas over the Vidarbha. As in the excavation report it has been mentioned that MNS 3 structure has similar technique of the Pauni stupa (Joshi, Sharma, 1999-2000, 128).

The Stupas discovered in the excavation of Pauni brought light to the flourishing Theravadin Buddhist establishment

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[6] Y.S. Alone in mentions *Assika* identified with the region in Nagpur district especially the region around Adam, which V.V. Mirashi placed this region in the Khandesh i.e. Jalgoan-Dhule district in Maharashtra. Further he mentions the Hathigumpha inscription and an inscribed seal found at Adam suggest its location in Nagpur District. *Dutiyecha vase achita yita Satakarni pacchipa-disa Hatha gaja-nara-ratha-bahul danda pathapyapi. Kanhabena-gatayacha senaya vitasiti assikanagara.* i.e. the army of Kharvella marched till the Assikanagara near (the rivers) Kanha and Bena. A seal unearthed from the excavation at Adam mentions *asakasa janapadasa*, Kanha is a river near Adam and a tributary of Wainaganga, thus it is evident from these inscriptional records that the region mentioned as Assaka and the Assikanagara is the region around the Adam. (Alone, Y.S., *Buddhist Caves of Western India: Forms and Patronage,* New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2016).

during the Maurayan period (Deo, Joshi, 1969, 53-60). It comprises of two stupas: one at the Jagannath mound and the other in Chandkapura which is about a mile south of Pauni but the remains of inscriptional evidences from Pauni does not mentions about the royal patronage. The fragmentary stone inscription no.30 from Pauni reads as *"Nandana gahapatino putasa Valanakasa pasado"*(Deo, Joshi, 1969, 42). This refers to the gift by *Valanaka* who was a son of the householder Nandana. Incidentally, this is the only record at Pauni which refers specifically to the 'gahapatī'.

Therefore, it can be inferred that the patronage of the Pauni site is from the people of the merchant community, house holders and local people who seem to have donated towards the development of the stupas. It is apparent that such a magnificent centre patronised on the grand scale by the trading community must have attracted large communities of the Bhikkus from the different parts of Vidarbha.

Recently, many evidences discovered from the various sites of Vidarbha indicates patronage of Buddhism belonging to the local people rather than royalty. Pradeep Meshram discovered the earliest rock-cut caves located around six miles from the village of Mandhal, which is about forty miles east of the Nagpur (Meshram, 1996, 155-166). Inscriptional record dated to the 2nd B.C.E. has been found from these rock cut caves. There are two inscribed records. One is in longer in two lines and other shorter one is a single word: "*sa Vandalaka*

putasa Apsalasa matikamam" it means '(the cave is) the work of Apala, the son of Vandalaka' (1996, 155-166).

The interesting notification of this inscription is that a similar name appears in the inscription at Pullar, Bhiwapur tehsil of Nagpur district. This inscription was found engraved on a stone pillar lying in a field near the rock-cut cave having four letters 'Vandalasa' (IAR,1994, 58). From the aforementioned evidences it can be derived that the Mansar stupas could have possibly been constructed by the locals, gahapatī or the merchant-class from Maurya to Sātavāhana period.

Fourth Stupa:

Archaeologists J.P. Joshi and A.K. Sharma have asserted that the later stupa belonged to post-Vākāṭaka period (500 C.E. to 700 C.E.) (Joshi and Sharma, 1999-2000, 131). However, Bakker has expressed doubt on the identification of later construction of the brick structure as the fourth stupa (Bakker, 2004, 83). Bakker is of the opinion that the Mansar image is the śaivite image 'Śiva Vāman' which was discovered from exactly the top layer at the south-western end of the hillock of the fourth stupa; he also suspects the other discovered images are also part of it (2004, 83). From his opinion it can be deduced that Bakker had already decided to place this structure into the śaivite religious category. Later, he refers Purātattva report where mention was made of the discovery of the factory site of the clay sealing at the north-

eastern corner of the MNS 3 site to prove this brick structure belonged to Vākāṭaka period (2004, 84). The baked clay seals had box-headed Brāhmi character which reads *Pravareśwarasya* and *Shri Jaivriddhi.* Some seals depicted an elephant and it appears to have been of great importance to the Eastern Vākāṭaka.(Joshi, Sharma, 1999-2000, 130). And it has been pointed out that the stone inscription discovered from the site are mostly prayers in Sanskrit(1999-2000, 130).

Simultaneously, one more contention has appeared in the excavation report. It stated that archaeologists found a western Kṣatrapa coin in the site on the surface of the Vākāṭaka period's layer. (Joshi, Sharma, 1999-2000, 131). But the description of this coin is completely absent in the Hans Bakker's article and in the second report 'Purāmanthana'. Though it hasn't produced the visual evidence of this coin but the description of this coin states that one side of the coin represents the bust of the king Rudrasena III and the reverse side has a chaitya with inscription as "Maha kshtrapa Swami Rudradaman Putasa Raja Maha Kshtrapa Swami Rudrasena 21 Saka"(1999-2000, 131).

There are many Kṣatrapa coins found in the Vidarbha region. But visually they all are little bit different from the above mentioned description of the coin discovered from Mansar. These coins display the bust of the king on the obverse and the reverse the hill symbolised in the centre with wavy horizontal lines which signify a river below, a crescent

on the left and the star on the right on the top of the legends are also present on the both sides.[7] Despite that there are visual differences in the coins which discovered from the rest of the Vidarbha region and a coin from Mansar. But for now we can assume from archaeologist's that the Mansar coin belonged to Kṣatrapa. There is no doubt that Kṣatrapa were benevolent towards buddhist from the fact that Rupiamma Kṣatrapa's memorial pillar is found near the Pauni Buddhist Stupa. However, it is possible that since coins always travel, so it need not be an indicator of the political content, as it is not a reliable source of information.

The most curious case about Hidimba Hill/ MNS 3 site is that none of the scholars have mentioned about the discovery of a seal having a verse of the Buddhist text: "ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣām tathāgato hy avadat teṣām ca yo nirodha evaṃ vādī mahāśramaṇaḥ" ("For the Budhha has told the cause of all the things that have their origin in a cause, and likewise the great mendicant has told of their destruction") (Kropmen, 2008, 5) (Fig.4).

Such kind of seals are commonly found at the various Buddhist sites all over the India. Only Martine Kropman

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[7] Coins of Damajadasri III, Bhaṛtadamen, Visvasena, Rudresena III, Yasodharman and Rudrasimha II are reported from Akot, Karanja (Akola district), Washim, Bhatkuli (Amamravati district), Adam (Nagpur district) and Paunar (Wardha district). (See Mirashi, V.V., *The History and Inscriptions of the Sātavāhana and the Western Kśatrapa*, Mumbai: Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture, 1981).

firstly mentioned about this seal. He said that the seal had buddhist identity but he defended archeologists by saying that on the basis of the palaeographic style this seal is belonged to 6th-7th century C.E. (2008, 5). He found the same palaeography on the back of the discovered Buddha statue from Sirpur (2008, 5).

On the other hand, he says that the excavation of Hidimba Hill/MNS 3 and Sirpur happened at the same time by Suarai Sasai. So, there is a possibility that when Surai Sasai did photographic documentation on behalf of the University of Shunchin, he misplaced one images from Mansar with Sirpur site's photographs (2008, 5). Although, the palaeographic style shows the similarity it doesn't mean that the Buddhist seal of MNS 3 site necessarily belongs to Siprur site. From these arguments, it is evident that this seal also comes in the controversial category. In the final stage the images discovered from the site during excavation has to be reanalysed.

Study of the Images discovered from the Hidimba Hill/MNS 3:

The main discourse is to find the period of the existence of the Buddhist site. It needs more clarification through the study of iconography. The archaeologists J.P. Joshi, A.K. Sharma and Hans Bakker both did not go into further in iconographic study of the discovered image. The problem with these images

was that they were mostly found in a very dilapidated condition. Joshi, Sharma and Bakker claimed that the sculptures belonged to the Brāhmanic religion and hence they named it Śiva Pārvatī, Umā-Maheśvar, Ganas, Lajjāgauri, Kinnar, and Laxmi with attendant (Joshi, Sharma, 1999-2000, 130 and Bakker, 2004, 79). From the dilapidated condition of these sculpture it is very difficult to make out the image's iconographic identity but some of the images which are still in a better condition are useful for the iconographic study.

Lakṣmi with attendant (?) (Fig. 5)

The high relief panel has two figures standing in a slightly twisted *tribhanga* (contrapposto) posture. From the appearance, the left side female figure could be the main figure of the panel by its height, having ornamented body especially hip portion, neck, leg ankles and the hairdo. The main figure holds lotus bud (*utpala*) in her left hand and the clothes are dangling from her both shoulders till the feet. The right arm of the figure is completely broken from the lower portion of the shoulder. From the general analysis it could be presumed that the broken arm was probably in the *varadmudra*. The companion of the main image, of shorter height as compared to main image, could be a subsidiary figure. This figure has less ornamentation, is cross legged, and is holding a the plate to support the stem of the lotus bud.

Joshi and Sharma identifies this composition of the figures as Lakṣmi with attendant without giving textual references. By tracing the textual sources *Baudhayana Dharmasutra* and *Mahābhārata* it can be deduced that Lakṣmi is an independent deity belonging to vaiṣnavism (Kumar, 2012, 225-226). While exploring the iconographic history of the Lakṣmi images it has come to be known that only Gaj-Lakṣmi appears independently in the third century B.C.E. to first century C.E. (Banergia, 2005, 225-6). Even, in the pre-Gupta period Sri-Lakṣmi appeared in the independent form (Guptas were contemporary to Vākāṭakas), later, from the Gupta period the representation of the Lakṣmi image majorly appears in the Gupta gold coins and seals but here also Lakṣmi is never represented in the standing position (2005, 225-6). Lakṣmi has elephant as companion in the pre-Gupta period in the visual evidences and, the archaeological and inscriptional records shows Viṣnu is the companion of Lakṣmi from the Gupta period onwards.(Kumar, 2012, 225-6).

Generally, Lakṣmi is represented as consort of Viṣnu and, Kubera as her associate(2012, 226). If the scholars are assuming that this is the image of Lakṣmi with attendant then it might be a unique form of Laxmi, who has lady companion during fifth century C.E.

But the noteworthy, Nepalese Buddhist text '*Sādhanamāla*' talks about the female figures holding *utpala* which are understood as *Tāra* (Bhattacharya, 2008, 105).

Further, Foucher says that the classification and identification of seven *Tāras* depends on their colour (2008, 105). The iconography of *Tāra* is also identified by the representation of *utpala* (lotus) held in their left hand and exhibiting the right hand in *Varadmudra* (2008, 105). Among the seven *Tāra* only two Taras bears the image of *Amoghasiddhi* on their crown. Rest of the five *Tāras* does not have *Amoghsiddhi;* the other way to identify *Tāra* images is based on their sitting position and, the presence of the female companions (2008, 106).

The panel of 'so-called Laxmi sculptures with an attendent' from the Mansar reminds us of the same iconographic composition of *Khadirvāni Tāra* from Indian Museum, Kolkata which belonged to 10th century C.E. However, *Sādhanamāla* text mentions *Khadirvāni Tāra* as being endowed with two hands which shows one hand in the *Varadmudra* and, second left hand having *utpala*. She can be recognised by the two attendant deities *Aśōkakanta Mārici* and *Ekjata* (2008, 106).

However, in the described composition of the images present there is only one attendant without having *Amoghsiddhi* images. Probably, the upper damaged part could had *Amoghsiddhi* earlier and, the image from Mansar and *Khadirvāni Tāra* from Indian Museum, Kolkata has five centuries gap so it is quite possible that the female figure from Mansar could be the earlier representation of *Tāra*.

Bodhisattvā Image (?) (Fig. 6)

This unknown image (Fig. 6) is also a damaged sculpture, it having the similar stylistic feature of Mansar so-called Siva image. The figure's both hands and legs are completely broken from the shoulders and the hip portion respectively. Stylistically, this image has similar resemblance to *Padmapāni Bodhisattavā* image from Ajanta cave 1. The calmness on the facial expression, body posture and the treatment of the volume are almost similar to *Padmapāni* from Ajanta cave no.1 image. Both these figures are ornamented with necklace, the ornamented belt passes over the left hip towards the right thighs, and the *muktayajnopavita* (garland over the chest portion) passes over the chest from left shoulder to the right portion of the *katibandha* (hip portion). But the damaged condition of this image's crown makes it difficult to compare with cave no.1 Bodhisattva image's crown.

Significantly, the panel of the *Padmapani Bodhisattvā* from cave 1 has *Kinnara* holding a musical instrument in the upper-left portion of the painting. Similar style of the *Kinnara* appears in Mansar site's museum collection. Both the *Kinnara* from Mansar and Ajanta shows similarity in ornamentation over the neck and hand. Despite the fact that the head of Mansar K*innara* image is broken, it is possible to recollect the appearance of the head by seeing the head of *Kinnara's* image from the Ajanta cave 1.

Re-mapping the so-called Śiva Vaman/ Jāmbhāl image

The discussion on the image of *Bodhisattvā*(?) and *Khadirvāni Tāra* supports the debate that so-called Śiva Vaman could be identified as Buddhist image. While carrying forward the discussion to trace the Buddhist identity of so-called Śiva Vaman, it is observed that majority of the scholars opined that it is a śaivite image. Only S.B. Deo (who later changed his identification with Batuk Bhairava) and Raghubir Singh makes glancing statement that the image could be Jāmbhāl image. The presence of śaivite characters like skull and crescent moon, snake and the absence of money bag are going against the identification of Jāmbhāl identity. Thus it become equally important to establish identity of the image based on the available Buddhist textual source. According to Buddhist text *Sādhanamāla,* Jāmbhāl is the chief of the yakṣas, parallel to the Brāhmanical god *Kubera* who appears in a dwarfish form (Donaldson, 2001, 329). Jāmbhāl is represented in yellow colour and his right hand contains *bījapūraka* (citron) and, the left hand holds a mongoose pouch raining with jewels *(ratnapravaṣamana-nakulidharamȧ)* (2008, 114). He wears a garland of lotuses, adorned with all kinds of ornaments (2008, 114).

Binoytosh Bhattacharya says the mongoose symbolises the container of all gems and jewels. When Jāmbhāl presses two sides of the mongoose it vomits gems and jewels contained within it (2008, 130). A. Getty mentions Jāmbhāl is holding a

bag merely made by the mongoose skin; however, in Tibet, it is claimed that the mongoose is symbolises the victory of Jāmbhāl (treasure guardian) over the Nāgās (Donaldson, 2001, 330). While comparing this local myth with snake twisted around Jāmbhāl's left leg; it could be the representation of subjugation of Nāgās to save the treasure. Therefore, it could be possible that the presence of the money bag is not necessarily an identification marker of Jāmbhāl image. On the issue of the skull and the moon, it can be resolved by getting the evidence of Jāmbhāl image having crescent moon over his head displayed in Museum Pusat, Jakarta (Chandra, 2002, 1502); and there are many Buddhist images which carry skull over it's jatāmukut as represented in the śaivite images such as Heruka and Sambhara (Donaldson, 2001, 221-223).

Therefore, from the above discussed evidences it could be possible that the so-called Śiva Vāman image is a unique form of Jāmbhāl in the 5th century C.E.

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Annexes:

Fig.1. So-called Śiva Vāman (Photo: Rohit Ukey).
Courtesy of the National Museum, New Delhi



Fig. 2. Boulder of the earlier Stupas.
(Photo: http://mansar.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/: Hans Bakker)



Fig. 3. Later Stupa (?)
(Photo: http://mansar.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/: Hans Bakker)



Fig. 4. Buddhist Seal
(http://mansar.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/: Hans Bakker)



Fig. 5. Lakṣmi with attendant (?)
(http://mansar.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/: Hans Bakker)

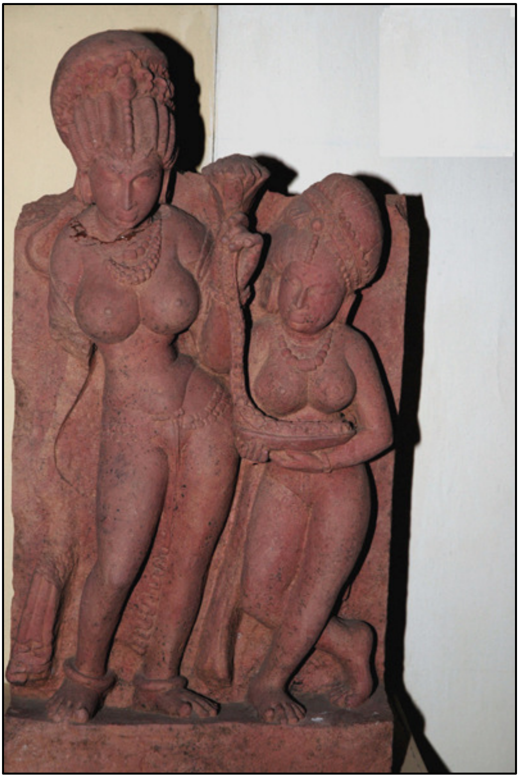


Fig. 6. Bodhisattvā Image (?)
(http://mansar.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/: Hans Bakker)



Maitreyi. The Bengali Connection

Mihaela GLIGOR
Babeș Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

Abstract: A novel - *Maitreyi* (*Bengal Nights*) - written in 1933 by Mircea Eliade, changed my life. This is the story of my incredible encounter with Indian culture and especially the Bengali connection who was/is/will be very dear to me for so many reasons, starting, of course, with Maitreyi, the character and the woman, who came into my life more than 20 years ago and transformed it completely.

Keywords: Mircea Eliade, Maitreyi Devi, correspondence, Bengali culture, literature, complementary stories.

Motto:
Because of M[*aitreyi*] *I lost the right to become an integral part of "historical" India.* (Mircea Eliade, *No Souvenirs*)
Mircea, I want to see you once more. (Maitreyi Devi, *Na Hanyaté*)

I was in high school when I first read *Maitreyi* (*Bengal Nights*), by Mircea Eliade. I was captivated by the story and fell in love with the exotic culture presented in the novel. I even changed my mind and instead of going to Faculty of Law, as I planned for several years, I chose Faculty of Philosophy, as

Mircea Eliade, convinced that someday I might visit this incredible country and learn more about its culture.

Many years passed and many things happened before my dream came, eventually, true. In the morning of October 8, 2007, I arrived for the first time in New Delhi, to attend to the *International Seminar on History of Religions to mark the centenary of Mircea Eliade (1907-1986),* organized at Jawaharlal Nehru University. I was the youngest from participants of Romanian delegation. The Seminar was a huge success. After it ended, some of us went to Calcutta, in search for Mircea Eliade footsteps. Only then, my dream was about to became reality. In fact, it was not a dream anymore. I was finally living it, there, in Calcutta, where the story that changed my life happened. And then, I met Maitreyi Devi's family. And I've learnt so many things about the incredible woman that she was.

Love Does not Die

I still have not managed to remember the exact date of my first meeting with Maitreyi.[1]

I forgive him for the harm he has done to me by writing things which were not true and also were unworthy of an Indian woman.[2]

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[1] Mircea Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, Trans. Catherine Spencer, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1994, p. 1.

[2] Maitreyi Devi to Mac Linscott Ricketts, letter from February 20, 1976, in Maitreyi Devi - Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Corespondenţă. 1976-1988*, Preface by Mihaela Gligor, Introduction by Mac Linscott Ricketts, Translated by Mihaela Gligor and Maria-Daniela Pomohaci. Edition by Mihaela Gligor,

> In the autumn of 1928, a few weeks after having taken my Licence ès Lettres, I left Bucharest for India, and returned in January 1932.[3]

Young Mircea Eliade met Maitreyi Devi in Surendranath Dasgupta's house in Bhowanipore area in Calcutta, where he lived for a while at the invitation of his professor, who was eager to show him the true India, and to facilitate his student a direct contact with the authentic Bengali life. The professor's daughter did not draw his attention immediately, but things changed soon.

> It is also true that the whole of my existence at Bhowanipore, not just Maitreyi, was miraculous and unreal to me. My coming to the house had been so quick, so effortless, and my life there was still so mysterious and disquieting.[4]

The love story between the two youngsters came to the ears of the professor, who banished Eliade not only from his home, but also from Calcutta.

Dasgupta's letters[5] lay down the gravity of the situation, but also, at the same time, Mircea's strong feelings towards

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Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2012, p. 22. The original letters can be found in Mihaela Gligor's Archive.

[3] Mircea Eliade, *Jurnal*, vol. 2, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1993, pp. viii-ix.

[4] Mircea Eliade, *Bengal Nights*, op. cit., p. 40.

[5] See Surendranath Dasgupta's letters in *Mircea Eliade și corespondenţii săi*, vol. 5 (Ș-Z), Edition by Mircea Handoca, Bucharest, Criterion Publishing, 2007, pp. 333-335.

the one who will remain for him always fascinating and exotic, like India itself.

The novel *Maitreyi* (*Bengal Nights*), published in 1933, brings to the young Mircea Eliade an unspeakable fame. The story contains extensive autobiographical passages and, with only a few exceptions, the author keeps the actual names of the people and places described. The novel was - and still is - a great success, being translated into many languages, with even a few screenings - the best known being *La Nuit Bengali*, directed by Nicolas Klotz, starring Hugh Grant.

But, as I had the opportunity to learn from her family and people who have met her, Maitreyi was more than a character. Maitreyi Devi was a poet, essayist, prose writer, one of the most remarkable women of Bengal. She had received a special education and had shown a very poetic sensitivity even since her young years. Her first volume of lyrics appeared when she was only 16 years old, carrying Rabindranath Tagore's Preface. Moreover, besides the four volumes of poetry written over time, the eight works on Rabindranath Tagore's life and work, Maitreyi wrote books of philosophy and also travel books. For *Na Hanyaté* (*It Does not Die*)[6], the reply-novel to

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[6] Maitreyi Devi, *Na Hanyaté,* Calcutta, Manisha Granthalaya, 1974. First English edition: Maitreyi Devi, *It Does Not Die*, Calcutta, P. Lal, Writers Workshop, 1976; University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1994, 1995. The phrase *Na Hanyaté* [*it does not die*] suggests aspiration to a quality of existence beyond the earthly and material. *Na Hanyaté* is taken from the *Bhagavad Gita*: "ayo nitya sasvato 'yam purano na hanyate

Mircea Eliade's story, Maitreyi Devi received, in 1976, the Sahitya Akademi Award, the most important distinction from the Academy of Indian Letters.

She was invited to give lectures on life and works of her dear friend and mentor, the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, or on Indian philosophy and culture, all over the world. She also had a special role in the emancipation of Indian women. Marked by the drama of children left on the roads as a result of territorial divisions and political struggles, Maitreyi Devi set up an orphanage[7] and attracted significant funds for educating and empowering young people in disadvantaged environments.

Though he did not know what her destiny was, Eliade thought at some point at Maitreyi. Thus, while in Portugal, Mircea Eliade writes in his *Journal*:

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hanyamane sarire […] nainam chindanti sasatrani nainam dahati pavakah" [Unborn, eternal, everlasting, primeval, it does not die when the body dies […] whom weapon cannot pierce, fire cannot burn].

[7] In 1971, in Khelaghar, a few kilometers away from Calcutta, Maitreyi started a school, following Rabindranath Tagore's principles. The school still functions even today. Khelaghar is a secular, charitable trust and welfare home and education resource center. It provides shelter, food and education free of cost to "Children in need and in distress". Set amidst the beauty of the village green, Khelaghar blends with its background and harmonizes with the flowing life around it. More details about this institution can be found here: http://khelaghar.org. Last accessed: September 23, 2018.

> But thirteen years have passed since I separated from Maitreyi [...] My life has taken a different path, and I must follow it to the end [...].[8]

> Fourteen years ago I saw Maitreyi for the last time.[9]

> While correcting the Portuguese translation of *Maitreyi*, I recall certain the essential episodes that I'd completely forgotten [...] Do I have so much capacity for forgetting, so much desire to forget? [...] It makes a novel, albeit a completely autobiographical one, to make me remember the most tragic moments I've ever lived! [...][10]

While in Paris, in 1946, Mircea Eliade wonders:

> How is she? What does Maitreyi think? [...] Did our love had no influence on everyone's destiny?[11]

Maitreyi also find herself thinking sometimes about Mircea. In 1953, while visiting Europe with her family, Maitreyi finds out that Mircea lives in Paris. She really wanted to see him, but she just sent him a letter:

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[8] Mircea Eliade, *The Portugal Journal*, translated from the Romanian and with a Preface and Notes by Mac Linscott Ricketts, State University of New York, 2010, p. 76, entry from 18 April 1943.
[9] Ibidem, p. 120, entry from 18 September 1944.
[10] Ibidem, pp. 122-123, entry from September 1944.
[11] Mircea Eliade, *Jurnal*, vol. 1, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1993, entry from May 10, 1946.

> I really want to see you very much - 23 years have passed. [...] I am waiting eagerly to meet you, it is not curiosity, I will really be glad to see you.[12]

Eliade did not answer her, although in his *Journal* he makes a long description of their special relationship and reminds that he saw her the last time on the night of 17 to 18 September 1930.

They met again in Chicago, in April 1973, where Maitreyi arrived along with a group of Jesuits. Mircea Eliade was, at that time, a famous historian of religions. He was very surprised by her visit. This unexpected meeting took him back in time, in his youth, when India was a major part of his life. In his *Journal* of that time, Eliade only noted that "Meeting with M. After almost 43 years. Everything seems surreal".[13]

While writting to Mac Ricketts, Maitreyi is rather gratefull for this encounter:

> This is destiny. I am thankful to Mircea that he is the inspiration and cause of the book which has changed my life in a big way. Not only the popularity that might feed my pride but actually the

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[12] See the letter sent by Maitreyi to Mircea Eliade on September 10, 1953. The letter is included in Maitreyi Devi - Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Corespondenţă. 1976-1988*, op. cit., p. 95. The original letter can be found in Mircea Eliade Papers, University of Chicago Library, box 91.5.

[13] Mircea Eliade, *Jurnal,* vol. II, op. cit., entry from April 13, 1973.

> love that I have received from all sections of the people is really unbelievable - which has made me humble and wise.[14]

Maitreyi did not lived to see the English edition of Mircea Eliade's book. But still, the novels written by the two of them had a different life of their own, as she somehow always knew.

> The books will float in the stream of time together [...] and they [authors] will move side by side completing an union that life refused.[15]

In 1994, a special conjoined edition was published by University of Chicago Press.[16] As a result of this special edition, in August 1994, *The New Republic* published an article signed by Anita Desai, the famous Indian writer. Titled "O Calcutta!", the article was extremely critical to Mircea Eliade's novel. And contained many inexactitudes, from the very beginning:

> In 1950 Mircea Eliade [...] published a thinly disguised account of a romantic episode in his youth in Calcutta, where he lived with a Bengali family and fell in love with their daughter, Maitreyi.

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[14] Maitreyi Devi to Mac Linscott Ricketts, letter from 1982, in Maitreyi Devi - Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Corespondenţă. 1976-1988*, op. cit., p. 77.

[15] See Maitreyi Devi's letter to Mac L. Ricketts from July 26, 1976. Maitreyi Devi - Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Corespondenţă. 1976-1988*, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

[16] Mircea Eliade's *Bengal Nights* and Maitreyi Devi's novel *It Does Not Die* were released in 1994 by the University of Chicago Press as companion volumes depicting two sides of a romance.

> Eliade's novel is a disturbing mixture of the racial and colonial attitudes of the day.[17] [...] Eliade is obsessed by racial differences, and takes pains to record the subtlest shades of skin color.[18]

Anita Desai offers then details about "Maitreyi's account" of the story, which "differs from Eliade's in several important respects", but still some things are different from reality.[19] Desai's angriness comes from the fact that

> University of Chicago Press has taken the imaginative step of bringing out both these books simultaneously, providing readers with a fascinating access to the two perspectives of a single affair. [...] All we have, alas, is an unlovely affair in which the "hero" farcically needs to mythologize the dark and initially unattractive Maitreyi into a primitive goddess so that he can find her fascinating.[20]

More than this, Anita Desai thinks Eliade was a fascist and compared him with Hitler. The first reply to Desai's article was a letter that Mac Linscott Ricketts sent to *The New Republic* the very next day, on August 16. Here is the letter,

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[17] A different opinion was expressed, 10 years before, by a Bengali Professor who had the luck to find Eliade's novel in a Library in Canada. Haragauri Narayan Gupta was Alfred Tarski's only doctoral student in foundations of geometry. His letter to Professor Mac Linscott Ricketts (and to Mircea Eliade) can be read below in Annex 1 of this material.

[18] Anita Desai, "O Calcutta", *The New Republic*, August 15, 1994, p. 43.

[19] Ibidem, p. 44.

[20] Ibidem, p. 45.

courtesy Mac Linscott Ricketts, who was extremely supportive and offered a copy of it:

The Editors	106 Lakeside Avenue
The New Republic	Louisburg, NC 27549
Washington DC 20036	16 August 1994

I regret that you have chosen once again, three years after publishing Norman Manea's "Happy Guilt" (*TNR*, Aug. 5, 1991), to attempt to besmirch the honored name of Mircea Eliade by representing him as a fascist. I refer to the review article by Anita Desai, "O Calcutta" (*TNR*, Aug. 15, 1994). The reviewer, who evidently knows little about Eliade other than recent slander and the two semi-novels under review, not only makes significant misstatements of fact, but she quite seriously misrepresents his attitudes toward the Indian people and their religion.

Eliade did not write his novel in 1950, but in 1932-33. It was composed in Romanian and published in 1933 as *Maitreyi*, only two to three years after the events it relates. The French translation, *La nuit bengali*, appeared in 1950, when Eliade was living in Paris. (A weakness of the English version is that it is a translation of a translation). Although the currect publisher fails to provide all this information, Desai should have seen alerted by Maitreyi's mention of first hearing in 1938 of Eliade's book about her. For essential background information, Ms. Desai might have consulted Chapter 10 of Eliade's *Autobiography*, a readily-obtainable book.

Eliade did not "write in 1978" the brief quotation attributed to him in the second column of Desai's review: it is a statement from

an interview of 1977, published as *Ordeal by Labyrinth* (p. 56). His reference here to "cosmic religious feeling" is not "a curiously, racial and cultural prejudice", as Desai says. Eliade explains quite clearly what he means in the continuation of the passage; moreover, "cosmic religion" is a major theme in his scholarly writings, as anyone with a rudimentary knowledge of them knows.

More serious is the attribution to Eliade as racist and white "colonial" attitude toward Indians. Eliade had his prejudices, but they were directed against the British and Anglo-Indians. For the Indian people and their religion, he had the highest regard and respect. How any reader of *Bengal Nights* could miss this, is beyond my comprehension. Eliade admired Gandhi and identified closely with the Indian national cause (see *Ordeal*, 52-53 and his early books, *Santier* and *India*). He told his 1977 interviewer, "[...] sometimes, I was even ashamed to be recognized as white; I was ashamed of my race". If he can be faulted, it is for being too uncritical and naively "romantic" in his embrace of Hindu customs and ideas (cf. his eagerness to live in the Dasgupta household, convert to Hinduism, practice Yoga, etc.).

Eliade's frequent references to skin colors and shades reflect the interests and views of the Indian and Anglo-Indians he knew, not his own. He was intrigued by the prejudices he encountered and included them in his book, but he emphatically did not endorse them.

When Desai refers to Maitreyi's being told by a Romanian that Eliade was a "fascist", she fails to mention that the source was a Communist poet of 1956 who was repeating the official party-government line - which was dropped in 1967. She also omits,

without an ellipsis, the last part of Maitreyi's comment here, thus putting a misleading tone on the whole statement. Her attempt to link Eliade to the unholy chain "Nietzsche-Hitler-Mussolini-Iron Guard-concentration camps" can only be taken as an effort at malicious slander.

Having known Professor Eliade personally and having corresponded extensively with Maitreyi Devi, it grieves me to see the views of both, but especially the former, distorted in a prominent magazine. Ms. Desai's venomous and uninformed review dishonors *The New Republic* even as it attempts to dishonor Mircea Eliade.

Respectfully yours,

Mac Linscott Ricketts[21]

Maitreyi Devi's legacy goes on. Her son and daughter-in-law continue her humanitarian work and Bengali culture shows the same respect for Maitreyi - the writer - as always. More than that, several researchers[22] succeded in presenting

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[21] A copy of this letter can be found in Mihaela Gligor's Archive.

[22] Fevronia Novac, "Maitreyi from Authenticity to Colonial Fantasy", *Theory in Action*, Vol. 9, No. 3, July 2016, pp. 13-37; Arina Cirstea "Re-writing the Colonial Story in Mircea Eliade's *Maitreyi* and Maitreyi Devi's *Na Hanyate*", *Theory in Action*, Vol. 6, No. 4, October 2013, pp. 37-59. See also Ginu Kamani, "A Terrible Hurt: The Untold Story behind the Publishing of Maitreyi Devi", online edition: https://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/143651.html, article last accessed on September 23, 2018. Ginu Kamani labeled Eliade's novel as "colonial fantasy". See also Sriparna Basu, "Passionate Fictions: Horizons of the Exotic and Colonial Self-Fashioning in Mircea Eliade's *Bengal Nights* and Maitreyi Devi's *Na Hanyate*", *Genders* 34, 2001, on line:

the facts in a new manner, insisting on Maitreyi's personality as well as on her novel.

Reading Mircea Eliade's texts of romantic encounter alongside Maitreyi Devi's Bengali text allows us to examine, in an instance of actual historical encounter, how these two sets of narratives relate to each other, the dense networks of affiliation and allusion as well as difference and critique which exist between them. *Maitreyi/Bengal Nights* and *Na Hanyaté* can also be read symbolically, as Sriparna Basu considers when writing about Maitreyi Devi's intention of rewriting the "truth" about her family and also about her trip to Chicago:

> If *Bengal Nights* can be read as a political allegory of the East-West encounter, in many respects *Na Hanyaté* operates a reversal of it; the final episode of the latter novel, in which Amrita travels to Chicago in order to confront Euclid/ Eliade with the "false writing" of *Bengal Nights* and bring him into the light of truth, reiterates a Gandhian pattern of *satyagraha* as a reverse discourse of civilization.[23]

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https://www.colorado.edu/gendersarchive1998-2013/2001/08/01/passionate-fictions-horizons-exotic-and-colonial-self-fashioning-mircea-eliades-bengal, Last accessed: September 23, 2018. See also Mihaela Gligor, "Searching for *Homo Religiosus* with Mircea Eliade in India", in *The West and Asia/Asia and the West: Essays on Transnational Interactions*, Elisabetta Marino and Tanfer Emin Tunc (Eds.), McFarland Publishers, 2015, pp. 235-243.

[23] Sriparna Basu, "Passionate Fictions: Horizons of the Exotic and Colonial Self-Fashioning in Mircea Eliade's *Bengal Nights* and Maitreyi Devi's *Na Hanyate*", op. cit.

But, as Sriparna Basu continues,

> What is most remarkable in the case of *Bengal Nights*, however, is that Maitreyi Devi, the protoype for the heroine of Eliade's novel and the figure in whom Eliade sums up the otherness and enigma of the East, wrote her own version of this romantic encounter in response to what she perceived as her misrepresentation in Eliade's exoticizing fiction. Maitreyi's critique shows up Eliade's narrative of heterosexual romance with her as a disguise for a more primary homosocial relationship that he formed with Surendranath Dasgupta, Maitreyi's father and Eliade's mentor during his trip to India. In responding to Eliade's fiction, Maitreyi draws on archetypes of Indian cultural nationalism, also structured by a trope of discovery or recovery of submerged aspects of self.[24]

Many things can be said / written about these two novel, and many people did that. My aim here was rather personal. I just wanted to reiterate, again, that Maitreyi Devi was an incredible woman. She was remarkably well-educated, and she was encouraged to express herself artistically. Her legacy lives on and Maitreyi - the woman, the writer and the character - continue to change the lives. Maitreyi is also my Bengali connection and the main reason I continue to be fascinated by Indian culture. I will always be gratefull for my

[24] Idem.

encounter with Maitreyi - the character and the novel; and Maitreyi - the woman, her family and her culture. Some stories never die. Some stories live forever through all those whose lives changed because of them. *Maitreyi/Bengal Nights* is such a story. *It does not die*.

About the Author:

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She is a specialist in Mircea Eliade's life and work and also interested in Philosophy and History of Religion, Indian Studies, and Interwar History. She is a member of The Romanian Writers Union, Associate Professor at Babeș-Bolyai University and PhD coordinator within Doctoral School of International Relations and Security Studies, BBU Cluj-Napoca. Recipient of VIRA 2017 award: *Outstanding Scientist in History and Philosophy* (www.viraw.info).

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Annexes

1.
Haragauri Narayan Gupta's letter to Professor Mac Linscott Ricketts

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

REGINA, CANADA S4S 0A2
(306) 584-4148

May 31, 1984

Professor Mac L. Ricketts
Department of Religion
Louisburg College
401 N. Main Street
LOUISBURG, North Carolina
U.S.A. 27549

Dear Friend:

The more I read Mircea Eliade's Autobiography which you translated, the more I feel an irrepressible urge to know him personally and to be in contact with him. I thought I should first write to you for a lead. I found your name in the American Faculty Directory.

One overriding reason I feel so drawn to the man is an account of his "adventurous years" in Calcutta. I am myself from Bengal and Bengali is my first language. I left Calcutta nearly 25 years ago and after an academic Odyssey through Germany and the United States, I now find myself at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada. I am now Head of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at this Univ-ersity. Mathematics and mathematical logic are the two areas where my professional interests lie. But Philosophy and Sanskrit-related studies have always been of abiding interest to me. The society that Eliade has described in his Auto-biography is very familiar to me. I was 4-6 years old at the time of his sojourn in Calcutta. The names 'Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandy' (by the way not Mahindra), 'Surendranath Dasgupta' are well-known names in Calcutta, hallowed until this day. I did not know about Eliade's Novel 'Maitreyi' until I read about it in the Autobiography and have been looking for a copy ever since. Maitreyi was written, of course, in Rumanian. Autobiography does not give any clue to translations. I found from the Library of Congress Catalogue that a French translation exists under the title 'La Nuit bengali' (Maitreyi), published in Paris in 1954. Unbelievably I discovered that our library has a copy of this French translation. I am now reading it almost with ecstatic interest. To my knowledge the existence of this novel is not known in today's Bengal. I am convinced that the Bengali reading public would welcome a Bengali trans-lation.

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Prof. Ricketts -2- May 31, 1984

Would you please communicate to Professor Eliade my wish to have it translated into Bengali. I am willing to do it myself with assistance from literary circles in Calcutta. Would the Professor agree to the idea of a Bengali translation? (Is anybody thinking of an English translation?) Apart from its intrinsic literary and psychological merits, the novel allows valuable glimpses of middle class Bengali life of the early thirties, caught in the maelstrom of a nationalist movement for Independence. I do not know of any work which so well protrarys the love and passion of a barely 16 year old Bengali girl reared in urban Calcutta, daughter of an eminent father who had access to all of the great personalities of those days. Maitreyi is veritably a phenomenon. Bengalis of today would adore her. I feel it.

Ever since I located the French translation in our library, I am wondering if Providence has not perhaps willed it that I undertake to translate the novel. Although I have not done any serious writing in Bengali, I feel that I am quite up to the task.

I would appreciate whatever assistance you can give me. I am enclosing an additional copy of this letter, for you may wish to let the Professor read it.

I am enjoying the autobiography immensely. The index is just excellent.

Looking forward to a reply from you.

Sincerely,

Haragauri N. Gupta

HNG/krh

“Haragauri Narayan Gupta (1925-2016) died on 26 September 2016 in Waterloo, Ontario, at age 91. He earned the doctorate from Alfred Tarski in 1965. He was Tarski’s only doctoral student in foundations of geometry. Gupta’s dissertation was devoted to a weakening of Tarski’s 1957 axiom system to incorporate geometries of all finite dimensions over arbitrary ordered coordinate fields. It was also the only source of proofs for Tarski’s 1957 results until the 1983 book by Schwabhäuser, Szmielew, and Tarski.

Gupta was born in Bhagalpur, Bihar, four hundred miles north of Calcutta, India. His father was a teacher of English and History. Haragauri entered the University of Calcutta in 1942. There he was strongly influenced by the mathematics chair, Friedrich W. Levi (1888-1966), a German refugee who specialized in the interplay between geometry and algebra. Haragauri earned a master’s degree in pure mathematics in 1945, began teaching at various locations, and earned a second master’s in statistics in 1949. In 1952 he married Manjula Roy (1932-2012), also a teacher. In 1957 Haragauri became principal of Calcutta’s Dum Dum Motijheel College.

Humboldt and Fulbright grants brought Haragauri to West Germany in 1959 to study logic, and a year later to Berkeley, a world center of logic research developed in the late 1940s by the renowned Polish emigre scholar Alfred Tarski. At Berkeley Haragauri was particularly influenced and aided by Tarski’s former student Wanda Szmielew, with whom he maintained close ties until her death in 1976. Benjamin Wells, a contemporary student of Tarski, wrote in 2014 that Haragauri may have been "...one of the strongest examples of Tarski’s tendency to overwork students. Wanda Szmielew’s student Zenon Piesyk was also researching

geometry based on Tarski's axioms. Tarski and Szmielew drove their two students crazy by repeatedly telling them that one had surpassed the other's results. The consequence was that Gupta's thesis approached a ream in length, well over 400 pages." Haragauri finished after five years, at age forty.

The next year, Gupta joined the mathematics department at the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan, now the University of Regina, where he remained for the rest of his career. Gupta published a number of papers on foundations of geometry, pure logic, and teaching. His guiding principle was "to work constantly to extend the limits of our knowledge, if only one little step at a time." He was an effective, inspiring, and scrupulously fair teacher. He supervised several master's students. The present writer, his only PhD student, also in foundations of geometry, graduated in 1970.

Gupta was a polymath, an articulate discussant in history, linguistics, religion, and politics as well as logic and mathematics. He was fluent in five languages and capable in six others. He served his university in numerous ways, including as department chair. He became an elder statesman of the vibrant Regina Hindu community".[*]

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[*] From the *Obituary* signed by James T. Smith, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics, San Francisco State University. http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/leaderpost/obituary.aspx?n=haragauri-narayan-gupta&pid=181673048 Last accessed: September 23, 2018. Haragauri Narayan Gupta's letter to Mac Linscott Ricketts (and Mircea Eliade) can be found in Mihaela Gligor's Archive.

2.
Maitraye - My Mother

by Priyadarshi Sen

Maitraye Devi, my mother passed away seventeen years back. When I look back her memories came crowding and I am pleasantly surprised to find that her presence is still fresh and fragrant in my mind.

My first impression of her is that of her sitting relaxed in her armchair - either reading or writing. At my age then I never stopped wondering why an adult having the rare prerogative of taking her own decision should spend so much time reading books.

In the lonely hills of Mungpu where my mother went to live after her marriage - there was little or no society. Ma therefore went on studying one subject after another from Egyptology to Botany, from Science to Literature and she studied them so well that she was almost a master in each of them. In later years sudden glimpses into the depth of her knowledge would leave me amazed. She gradually developed a multifaceted personality with knowledge and interest in various fields which was unusual in that era in Bengal. This was also partly an outcome of her deep devoted association with her mentor world famous poet Rabindranath Tagore. His writings influenced Maitraye greatly and her personality evolved... Maitrayi blossomed into a flower. Maitraye was a very erudite person. At the same time she was feminine too... maintaining a beautiful household, trying out new recipes, designing furniture or

landscaping gardens. At one point of time I even saw her directing dance dramas.

She was a very down to earth socially aware person and took to addressing serious issues. She worked for social harmony and formed a Council for Promotion of Communal Harmony. Whenever she has seen injustice she raised her voice.

During the Bangladesh war my mother devoted herself to relief work and started a school at the relief camp in the border area for the uprooted orphaned children in the camps. She also opened a temporary home for such children who went back to Bangladesh after war.

In 1972 she opened a Home for "Children in need and in distress" near Calcutta in the suburbs. She worked for this Home till she died. This Home was formed on the basis of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy and ideals. She was a writer, a poet, a social worker, a humanist. Whenever I try to think about Maitraye - my mother I find her journey from her girlhood to her final days was a unique one. A simple ordinary girl turned herself into an extraordinary dynamic human being. She made life around her interesting and special - though turbulent at times. Being her children was a great experience.*

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* *Maitraye – My Mother*, by Priyadarshi Sen, was first published in *Professor Mircea Eliade: Reminiscences.* Volume edited by Mihaela Gligor and Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Foreword* by Mihaela Gligor, *Preface* by Mac Linscott Ricketts, Codex Publishing House, Kolkata, India, 2008, 277 p., ISBN: 978-81-906429-0-3, pp. 210- 211. The original of this memoir can be found in Mihaela Gligor's Archive.

3.

Maitreyi Devi with the children from Khelaghar.

***Courtesy* P. Sen**



REVIEWS

Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India*, Springer, Cham, 2017, 270 pp., ISBN: 978-3-319-44035-4.

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In recent years, especially at "the end of the Cold War"[1], environmental security and, implicitly, environmental sustainability arouse at the center of various debates. The academic realm continues to assess such dimensions from a welter of perspectives, be it from within narratives related to human security, the consciousness of political security or implications associated with military security[2]. *Ergo*, the broad proposition of environmentalism could be depicted easily in international affairs, and plays a greater role than ever before on political agendas, in the specialized literature, and beyond. Taking several of these aspects into account, Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, and Sanjay Chaturvedi

[1] Rita Floyd, "The Environmental Security Debate and its Significance for Climate Change", in *The International Spectator*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2008, p. 51.
[2] Ibidem, pp. 52-54.

publish an enthusiast study that "represents an important contribution to understanding and promoting environmental sustainability in a millennial context…"[3].

Regarded as an assemblage of "histories, contestations, theories, and innovative ideas in the study of environments"[4], as the authors *per se* admit, *Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India* represents an achievement not only in terms of analyzing a particular spectrum of current Chinese-Indian relations, yet also in regard to understanding, more broadly, "complex environmental issues"[5]. Thus, the interdisciplinary narrative of this book includes analogous historical perspectives, overviews and insights to environmental studies - a relatively new discipline -, as well as new directives ("future requirements"[6]) towards potential resolutions.

Structured into ten different chapters, the architecture of the work is precise and uncluttered. As a result, the content becomes gradually comprehensive as the reader advances to the resolution of the book. However, it is essential to observe that the notions correlated to the interdisciplinary nature of the book are curved across the narrative. This being said differently, if the authors

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[3] See Nitin Desai, "Reviews of 'Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India' ", in *Springer*, https://www.springer.com/gb/book/9783319440354#reviews, accessed 30.09.2018.

[4] Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India*, Springer, Cham, 2017, p. vii.

[5] Ibidem.

[6] Ibidem, p. xi.

decide to include at the beginning heavy historical consideration, this changes towards the conclusion due to the newly impaired commotion of subdivisions debated, analyzed, namely those affiliated to technical environmentalism.

A major point that is raised in the introduction is represented by those processes "of rapid economic growth that has characterized the recent economic history of [both] China and India…"[7], mixed with various arguments (later to be found in the closure of the book) related to population "as territorial nation-states [that] stand at a crossroad"[8]. Therefore, the first two chapters discuss factual evolutions of "environmental struggles and innovations" in China[9] and India[10], separately. Shikui Dong focuses on delivering a "temporal scale with a historical lens to show the environmental wisdoms, struggles, and innovations from ancient times to modern era…"[11], being slightly more preoccupied with aspects related to

[7] Ibidem.

[8] Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi, and Shikui Dong, "Conclusion", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 239.

[9] For further reference, see Shikui Dong, "Environmental Struggles and Innovations in China: A Historical Perspective", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 17-43.

[10] For further reference, see Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, "Environmental Struggles and Innovations in India: A Historical Perspective", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 45-68.

[11] Shikui Dong, "Environmental Struggles and Innovations in China: A Historical Perspective", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 17.

philosophical ideas, noted here as "the 'harmony between the heaven and human' in ancient China…"[12].

On the other hand, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay defines the Indian historical outline in a much more pragmatic manner. Accordingly, the different historical approaches between Shikui Dong's very first intervention, and Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, although complementary in the sense that both discuss aspects of social innovations, lay in those ascertainments pertaining to the overture. From a more narrow angle, Dong talks about a history of environmentalism in China, while Bandyopadhyay deals with the topic of "environmental changes in India"[13]. This central advent is crucial to understanding, for example, the further comparisons between the Yellow River and the Ganges (named *inter alia* as the "two Mother Rivers"[14]) that are to be found in chapter four.

Bandyopadhyay establishes a much more historical derivate only later on[15], arguing the importance of the Yellow River and the Ganges without which "human history in Asia would have been very different"[16]. It is of particular interest to detect the sense of

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[12] Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, "Environmental Struggles and Innovations in India: A Historical Perspective", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 45.
[13] Ibidem.
[14] Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, "Restoration of Ecological Status of Himalayan Rivers in China and India: The Case of the Two Mother Rivers-The Yellow and the Ganges", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 69.
[15] Bandyopadhyay debates the historical range of water scenarios in both China and India, in an attempt to predict policy developments. For further reference, see Ibidem, pp. 79-84 and pp. 88-92.
[16] Ibidem, p. 70.

responsibility inserted in the text as this book tackles topics related to "indigenous knowledge"[17], for instance, - an allusion to various lessons "of the Himalayan grasslands in terms of ecosystem"[18], and cross-border cooperation. Consecutively, one of the genesis that could be found lay in Bandyopadhyay's arguments that define the Himalayan region as today's "Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan…"[19], and how "The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 stressed on the crucial role of the mountains of the world…"[20]. Similarly, "the Brundtland Commission [and the] World Conference of Rio+20"[21] could also be conceived as vectors of the same genesis.

From a broader perspective, the current issue is of interest, *firstly*, because it admits "the futility of the 'comparisons'"[22] due to the fact that it acknowledges the geopolitical pattern - *i.e.* the differences between China and India at the level of "highly State-centric notions of political culture and structure, not without some

[17] For further reference, see Shikui Dong, "Himalayan Grasslands: Indigenous Knowledge and Institutions for Social Innovation", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 99-126.
[18] Ibidem.
[19] Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, "Restoration of Ecological Status of Himalayan Rivers in China and India: The Case of the Two Mother Rivers-The Yellow and the Ganges", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 70.
[20] Ibidem, p. 69.
[21] Sanjay Chaturvedi, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, and Shikui Dong, "Introduction", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 1.
[22] Ibidem, p. 4.

justification"[23]. *Secondly*, it applies the principles of "multiscalar innovative responses to threats"[24] which has not been applied before in the case of China, nor India. *Thirdly*, it identifies social patterns in terms of structuralism that become also known as "burgeoning consumer culture and consumption practices"[25] that are distinctive for emerging economies. *Lastly*, it highlights a set of definitions associated with innovation[26], natural environment[27], or environmental sustainability[28] which are subject to certain Chinese and Indian introspective analysis.

From a more narrow standpoint, this book review argues that this work encourages environmental innovation for in the end to endorse monumental approaches to sustainability, fight against climate change, and to the conservation of biodiversity[29]. The contextual tendency is to approach the major topic addressed through various study cases, intercalated from particular to general. For this reason, the assessed book acquires a truly realistic panorama, affirming "largely uncharted… [that] through this book we have made an attempt to demonstrate that geographies, physical and human, do matter and will continue to do in the realization of

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[23] Ibidem.
[24] Ibidem.
[25] Ibidem.
[26] Ibidem.
[27] Ibidem, p. 5.
[28] Ibidem.
[29] For further reference, see Sanjay Chaturvedi, "Coastal Mangrove Forests: Micro-Geopolitics of Resistance and Social Innovation for Environmental Sustainability", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 165-204.

environmental sustainability"[30]. These monumental approaches are not highlighted through the plain narration of historical facts and events, yet these are created through comparisons, such as those with Ireland[31], and compilations of economic, judicial and political arguments. Nonetheless, the multitude of charts and maps.

In conclusion, *Environmental Sustainability from the Himalayas to the Oceans: Struggles and Innovations in China and India,* although well structured and clear in its objective as a whole, is not as oriented towards government establishments as expected. It encourages, in the light of the fact that both China and India are the most populated countries in the world[32], to resolve most environmental issues by working with the masses, and not necessarily with governmental agents. It is easily to depict an image that tackles topics such as visual ecology[33], yet it does not address any potential solutions that could be implemented by, and with the support of the international organizations or even other state actors. There is a tendency to believe that this book is just an exponent of

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[30] Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi, and Shikui Dong, "Conclusion", in in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 240.

[31] For further reference, see Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, "Environmental Struggles and Innovations in India: A Historical Perspective", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 53.

[32] Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2119rank.html, accessed 29.09.2018.

[33] Victoria Marshall, "Designing Mega Delta Interactions", in Shikui Dong, Jayanta Bandyopadhyay, Sanjay Chaturvedi (eds), *op. cit.,* Springer, Cham, 2017, p. 208.

issues in a particular geographical region, and thus this review questions the long-term viability of the study: Does it really inject durable solutions? Could this book simply serve solely as an assessment study for further debates and considerations? Is it meant to deliver a certain message to decision making factors or does it endorse what has already been achieved in terms of regional environmentalism?

About the Author: Radu Sava holds a BA in International Relations and European Studies (Faculty of European Studies of Babeș-Bolyai University) with a thesis entitled *China's Cultural Diplomacy in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989. Study case: Romania*.

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Devdutt Pattanaik, *Culture. 50 Insights from Mythology*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2017, 240 pp., ISBN: 9789352644988.

Hilda-Hedvig VARGA
Bucharest University

In his book, suggestively entitled *Culture. 50 Insights from Mythology*, Devdutt Pattanaik brings the reader delightful mythological episodes from the fascinating land of India, interwoven with contemporary references from cinematography, politics, philosophy and psychology, to name a few. His personal experiences help create a more accessible pool of information for the profane, at the same time constituting an interesting premise for the specialist to ponder upon, later drawing his own conclusions (the same or different from the author's). The array of themes and concepts encompassed is wide enough for every taste and mindset; even if some themes are recurrent, the new context they are put in or the distinct point of view that is adopted each time enriches the beauty of the finished product, saving the reader from a tiresome, even irksome encounter.

Our understanding of culture is restricted by the environment we have lived in, the values deemed important in that particular environment, the belief system attached to it and the language used as means of communication – essentially, a *frame of reference*, as put by Pattanaik in the chapter bearing the name *Frames of reference*. No doubt, our frame is limited by personal experience, divinity being the only one having access to the entire picture; nonetheless, our biased view of the world should not hinder us from

celebrating dissimilarities as jewels of uniqueness, since the mere idea of a single code shared cross-culturally is as dark a nightmare as an imminent end: only one window to see the world's prized possessions – which equates to a single perspective – is indeed criminal.

Consequently, using a pair of "rationalist" glasses to behold myths as part of culture shall lead to a terrible disillusionment: a rational question can challenge the integrity of a myth at every step, sending it tumbling to the ground and shattering it to pieces. However, as the author explains, myths do not focus on social issues and do not claim to offer solutions to age-old problems, but aim to create a framework, constructing a bigger picture on which other stories can be woven.

Because Indian thought is strikingly different from the Western perspective of life, myths must be accepted as bearers of the essence of the culture they hail from – with an open mind and spirit, that is; openness, an incredibly useful tool in many aspects of life, reminds us of Franz Boas' theory on *cultural relativism*, where cultures should be explored according to the rules of those specific cultures, where we should not try squeezing them in our afore-constructed reality and truth about them, wearing the lenses of our own culture; the sole achievement of such an approach shall certainly be a crooked or idealized version of the truth. If Western thinking acknowledges one earthly existence followed by an afterlife – essentially, one beginning and one end – the same cannot be applied to the Indian perspective, where there are many beginnings and many ends – an infinity, to be precise – because *existence is*

cyclical, the doctrine of rebirth being an integral part of culture, reinforcing it whenever needed.

Humans cannot do without frames of reference, if for nothing else, for sanity and survival reasons. As these frames change according to a certain epoch, so do myth and culture; a perfect example of culture in change can be found in *Changing patterns*, where designs made with rice flour or colourful powders (popularly known as *rangoli*) have been restricted to festival season in many parts of India, as opposed to times when they were the pride and joy of the household every day – freshly made each morning, echoing the mood and energy of the matriarch.

If patterns change with the passage of time, so must the rites and rituals of a culture. In *Changing rituals*, Pattanaik ponders upon weddings and how the *sangeet*, one of the last occasions of women bonding and preparing the bride for wifehood, has become, in many communities, a lavish display of designer clothes and well-rehearsed choreography during the last few decades. The essence that rests in rites of passage, such as marriage, and rituals in general is the structuring element that gives humans the feeling of being part of a plan, of being blessed with a purpose. However, even these milestones have started losing soul – the reasons are as diverse as the human race, yet we dare extract a universal: people are constantly searching for something (be it higher education, a life-partner, a better job or lifestyle and what not). As can be seen, these examples highlight the material, hence the ephemeral, component of life; but is *this* people are looking for so passionately?

Pattanaik explains that values are dearly missing nowadays and that their comprehension is incorrect: values are not rules and

regulations or the embodiment of a code of conduct, but are in fact the fundament on which the afore-mentioned rest; values are usually in the safekeeping of the elderly, the storytelling grannies, and the younger generations expect them to deliver instructional material of high quality – forgetting that beside the stories characteristic to the culture, the grannies also have their own to share; thus, *people are seeking an identity, rather than values*, says the author in *Outsourcing the storytelling grandmom*.

What should a person do then? Strive towards financial security or focus on mending a tired soul? Neither is easy, and the energy needed for introspection could be used elsewhere; nonetheless, for Indians spirituality and elevation of the soul have always been above the external goals that may bring happiness; this idea is beautifully made sense of by the author with the help of Lakshmi and Saraswati in "*Immersion time*": Lakshmi leaves an imprint whether we want it or not, but Saraswati touches us only if we let her, in other words "*Lakshmi makes us grow externally, whether we want to or not. Saraswati helps us grow internally, but only if we allow her to*" – anyone can earn a living, but not everyone is willing to open mind and soul to receive true knowledge. Knowledge is easily acquirable, but wisdom cannot walk alone – if not backed up by *empathy*, knowledge remains just that, a well of information that lacks its essence.

To help the circle come to a close, we shall revisit the idea of culture as a body made up of *place, time and people*; it is only natural, as we have seen, that culture suffers change since all its components alter; and yet, we still find it difficult to read culture in its barest form: British Orientalists, reminds us Pattanaik in "*How*

we read mythology", imposed a racial view on history and mythology, while American scholars used the lens of fairness and justice. However, to comprehend Hindu thought, by extension mythology as well, one has to agree to Hindu assumptions – or at least bear in mind that members of a community can grow fairly different opinions from our own, we dare add.

In order to better grasp the Indian view on culture, mythology and ultimately life, the author urges the reader to contemplate key concepts such as *rebirth*, *karma*, *maya*, *kala*, *detachment* and many more. By interweaving such serious topics with contemporary affairs and mythological episodes, the reader is offered an insightful journey into the depths of a uniquely flavoured history, never losing touch with the present; as we admiringly like to say about India, *past and present always coexist at any given time* – one reason that may explain the fascination born for this millennial culture.

About the Author: After having completed a B.A. in Philology, with the major in English and the minor in Hindi, Hilda-Hedvig Varga went on to finish her Master's studies in Religious Studies, both at the University of Bucharest. She is currently a PhD student at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, with a thesis on *Hindu rites of passage*. Her interests encompass anything Indian, be it language and literature, history or philosophy.

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Binoo K. John, *The Curry Coast. Travels in Malabar 500 years after Vasco da Gama*, Speaking Tiger, India, 2016, 251 pp., ISBN: 978-93-86050-68-7.

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There is perhaps no better description of Kerala than this old Malayali saying: "the god who made Kerala had a green thumb"[1]. A controversial land, very well known for its past battles for spices[2] and power, Kerala might seem nowadays just a serene place lost in time, unable to attract any investment or industry.

From far, Kerala looks like a piece of heaven, surrounded by coconuts, serene beaches and tropical greenery, and the Malayali is just a nostalgic, a lazy person who knows that he can make a good living "just by possessing two pounds of pepper"[3].

At a micro-level, though, the Malayali is always on the go; to fly away is his ultimate desire. The government is also encouraging it. There is no idea of nationalist pride or inspiring stories of nationhood; the Malayali sees his own land - once invaded by Portuguese, Dutch, English and French people - just as a place for retirement.

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[1] "The god who create Kerala had a green thumb", old Malayali saying referring to the lush, tropical greenery the state of Kerala has in abundance.

[2] Neighbouring the Arabian Sea, Kerala was a battlefield for many cultures in search for exotic spices like: pepper, cardamom, saffron, vanilla, etc.

[3] Referring to Murkot Rammuny's opinion about Keralites. He attributes the traditional laziness of the Malayalees to the fact that they can have a good life by just having two pounds of pepper (p. 168).

In his travelogue, Binoo K. John tries to showcase a better image of a place which is thought to exist just to entertain the tourists. Retracing the footsteps of the explorer Vasco da Gama exactly five hundred years after his arrival on the shores of Calicut[4], the author starts his journey in a land which, on one side, looks back at its past with a glimpse of nostalgia, and on the other side, is pulsating with aspirations and ideas for the future.

The author starts off at Calicut, the gateway to Malabar and the place where Vasco da Gama first arrived in Kerala, then crosses Kannur, meets the last Zamorin of Calicut[5], checks out the nerve-centre of Ayurveda[6], meets the tribes from the South in Mananthawady[7] and finally ends his wanderings in Goa, the last bastion of the Portuguese empire.

Without any introduction, the author takes his reader straight-away into the aromatic insides of Malabar where "the nose tickles to different smells at every bend of the many rivers."[8] From steamed rice cakes topped with coconut grating called *idlis*, to mountains of rice with *fish fry* or *beef*, from *dal vada* or *neyyaporu* or *bonda*, to

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[4] It is said that Vasco da Gama reached on the shores of Calicut on 20th of May 1498.

[5] The Zamorin of Calicut is the title of a Hindu monarch who governed the Kingdom of Calicut on the Malabar Coast. They were based at Kozhikode (Calicut), one of the most important trading ports on the south-western coast of India.

[6] Kotakkal is considered to be the nerve-centre of Ayurveda but the ancient tradition of herbal medicine is spread all over the country.

[7] Mananthawady is considered the place where Naxalites started their movement but it is also known for the tribal community residing there.

[8] Binoo K. John, *The curry coast: Travels in Malabar 500 years after Vasco da Gama*, Delhi, 2016, p. 31.

plates with multiple types of curries, food is a constant mouth-watering character in the book. Because in Malabar “they eat well” and travelling from the west to the east of the region is like “having a meal melded with many curries”.[9]

Even though the gastronomy of Malabar is so complex and differs from one region to another, one dish remains constant in the Malayali diet: fish. In every city you can find a row of fish-sellers on some streets:” Sardines and mackerels are Kerala’s favourites. The *matthy curry*, made with black tamarind and generous doses of chilly powder, makes a divine combination with boiled and shredded *cassava* (*kappa*).”[10]

For a Malayali, travelling has its own routine as well: a glass of milk or filtered coffee, *poovam pazham* and the last newspaper of the week are definitely part of it. As an avid traveller, B. K. John takes buses, boats and trains and has the habit of always stopping at the “Meals Ready” places where he enjoys the local specialities. In Wayanad, he asks for a plain *dosa* which is served with coconut chutney fried with red chilly, in Calicut he tastes the egg-topped *biryani*, the *pathiri*, the *chatti* full of prawns with deep fried onions and cashew. He enters different bakeries where he tastes syrupy *faloodas*, spongy cupcakes and huge pieces of *halwas*.

From North to South and West to East, the author’s soujourn is a visual delight and a tour of Malabar’s flavours and aromas; his description of *faloodas* in Calicut is definitely a taste odyssey:”there were many layers of icecream and a rainbow of colours denoting the various fruits and coloured liquids that had been forced into the

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 31.
[10] *Ibidem*, p. 131.

glass made it appear delicious. I could taste raisins, nuts, bits of fried cherry, pineapple, bits of papaya, mango, vanilla, chocolate and butterschotch icecream."[11]

In Kochi, the eateries are opened the whole night and they serve many varieties of *fried fish*, *fish molly*, *beef fried*, *duck curry*, omelettes, etc. B.K. John considers them a blessing for the *toddy*-lovers roaming around in the dark streets and not knowing when will they reach home.

Throughout the book, J. makes different observations about the social and political life of Malabar. He goes to Mananthawady district where the Naxalite[12] movement took root in Kerala in the 1960s, visits the 96-year-old Zamorin whose ancestors welcomed Da Gama to Calicut, observes the wave of anti-colonialism in the state and reflects on the aspirations of the Malayalees and their lack of nationalism.

The author does not miss any opportunity to make comparisons between the North and the South of India. As he mostly travels by bus, he observes that in Kerala they are very well maintained and that the rules are very much respected, unlike in the North. The rides are pleasant and the roads are very good compared to other states and the buses are usually decorated with religious motifs inside, with statues of Jesus and flickering lights: "The ride was as delightful as the other rides I had taken along the innards of Malabar in speeding buses."[13]

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[11] *Ibidem*, p. 57.
[12] The Naxalites are the members of the communist party in India. The movement started in Bengal (Naxalbari village) and reached North Kerala in the late 1960s.
[13] *Ibidem*, p. 129.

Another observation he makes is related to the beggars; they cannot be seen at every street corner like in the North and the very few ones that live here are mostly belonging to nomadic tribes from Tamil Nadu.

Throughout his journeys, J. meets different writers, local journalists and anthropologists who present a nuanced perspective of Kerala. For example, in Dharmadom, he spends an entire afternoon talking about the Mappilla revolt[14] from 1921 with M. Ramunny[15], a writer who has documented the Malabari life for decades. Then, he visits the social anthropology department of the Brennen College in Tellichery where he meets Anantha Bhanu[16], the head of the department and the one who had pioneered the study of the tribals of Malabar (like Cholanayakans, for example). Not only he takes other's opinions about Kerala into consideration, but he is always accompanied by the god of Malabar, Logan[17] and his very famous "Malabar Manual".

Even though history "had a fascination for Malabar", taking into consideration all the foreign powers who saw in this land a battlefield for spices, it is not the main subject in B.K. John's writing. His

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[14] Mappila revolts refer to a series of riots caused by the Mappila, the Muslims of Malabar in the 19th and 20th century against the Hindus and the state.

[15] Murkot Rammuny is a writer and chronicler who documented the Malabari life and wrote about the people of Nagaland. His most famous book is "The world of Nagas".

[16] Bhaskaran Ananda Bhanu was an Indian anthropologist who wrote about the tribes of southern India.

[17] William Logan (1841-1914) was a Scottish officer of the Madras Civil Service under the British Government. He was speaking Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. He is very famous for his "Malabar Manual", a guide to the Malabar District.

travelogue mixes daily routines of the author, people he meets on the road, insights into the traditions of Kerala and thoughts about its future and its people. He mixes social observations with anecdotes and historical facts. The author's idea was to feel the pulse of the region rather than explaining some issues or narrating some facts.

B.K. John's book reveals a land with an intriguant and violent past which is as complex and fascinating as the traditional curry meal which is part of the Malayalee diet and which consists of more than twenty dishes.

Reading *The Curry Coast* one can travel along with the author as a novice, always being taken by surprise by scents in the air, lush green sceneries and unexpected happenings from one place to another. Because the author considers that travel should not be planned and that innocence is the best asset when one hits the road. It is as if the reader, seated in a *vallam*[18], can slide through countless canals of a collective memory and reconstruct what has always been known as "God's own country".

About the Author: After having completed a B.A in Anthropology and Comparative Literature with a thesis on Shiva and Kali, Catalina-Ioana Pavel went on to study Arabic and Hindi at the University of Bucharest. She is mostly interested in the history of Malabar region, the spice routes and the Islamic influence in Kerala and anything related to South India in general.

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[18] The traditional boats that can be found in Kerala are called *vallams*.

Call for papers

The *Romanian Journal of Indian Studies* invites researchers and academics to contribute to the third issue (2019).

Contributions are welcomed in the form of studies, articles or book reviews. The material will be accompanied by an *Abstract* (10 lines) – except for book reviews – a list of up to ten *Keywords*, and by the author's bio-note. The language in which materials will be published is English. The deadline for the submission of the papers is 1 September 2019.

Materials, as well as general inquiries, can be sent via e-mail at mihaela.gligor@ubbcluj.ro.

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